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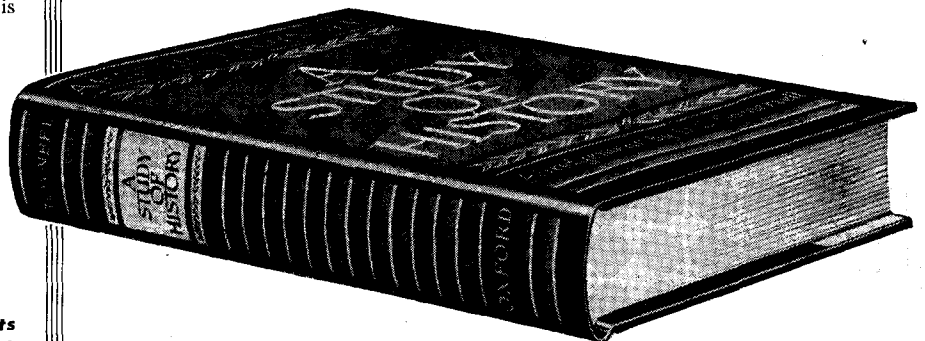
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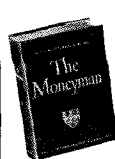
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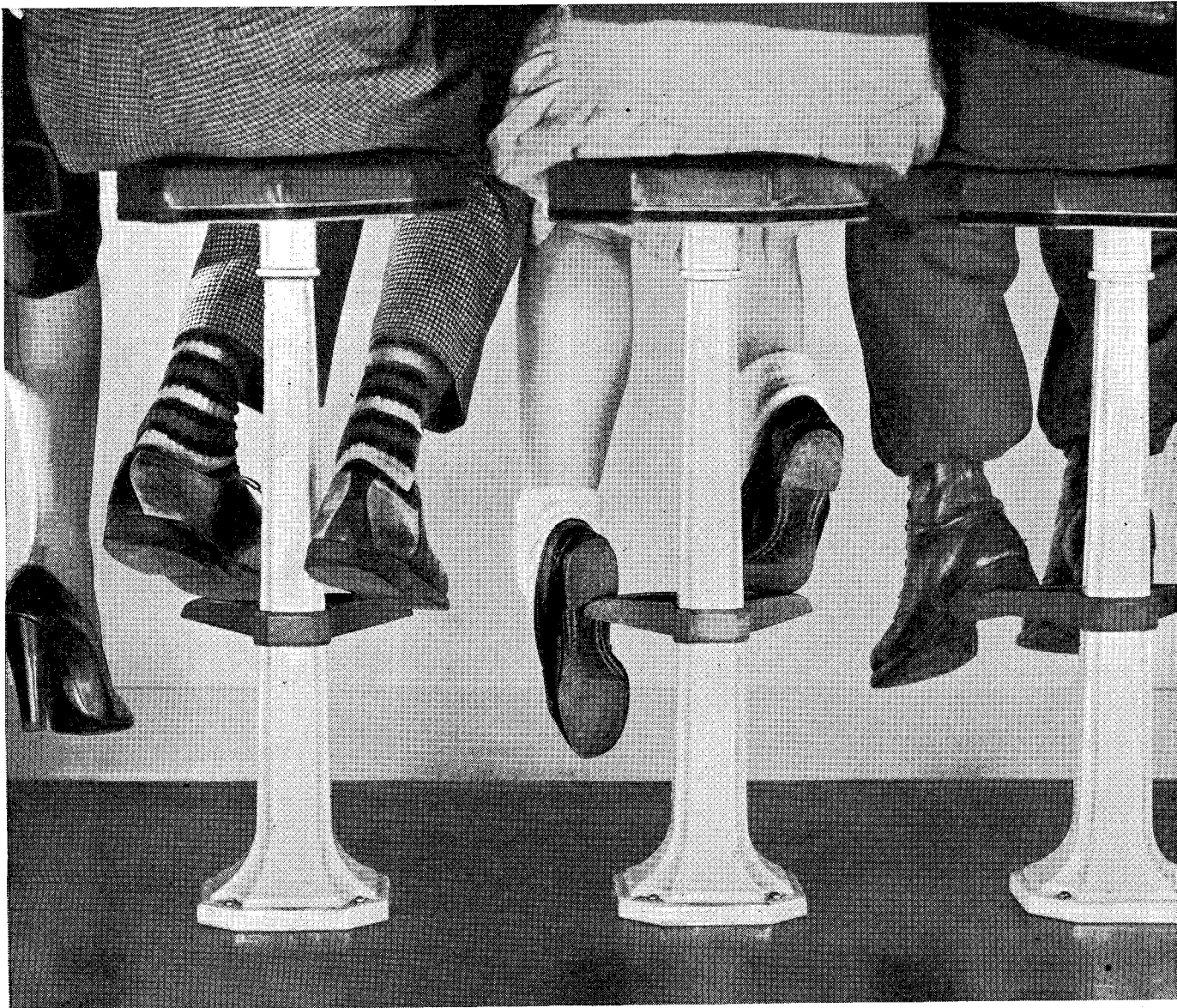
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THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



Moscow

THE Russians won the war by concentrating on the barest essentials and ruthlessly casting aside everything that had no direct relation to the war effort. Among the temporary victims of the wartime discard were the Marxist ideologists and Party propagandists. The slogan "Workers of the world, unite!" was removed from the mastheads of the Army newspapers and a new national anthem was substituted for the "Internationale."

The moratorium on Marxist ideology lasted until victory appeared certain. Communism was revived as a living faith just before the war ended. The press and radio then launched an intensive campaign for the revival of Marxism. New theoretical publications were issued and the anticipated purge of the Party, industry, and arts was on.

The ideological revival and housecleaning, now three years in development, were dramatized in August by Andrei Zhdanov's severe blast against Georgei Alexandrov, Party philosopher and chief of the powerful Central Committee's Press and Propaganda Department.

Zhdanov, after conferring with Stalin and the country's most eminent philosophers, declared Alexandrov too "idealistic" in his views and too much under the influence of foreign thinkers. To be subservient to foreign thought is now a capital sin in the Soviet Union. Consequently, Alexandrov's popular book on the history of philosophy, which had previously won the approval of the Party theorists, was adjudged inadequate in its treatment of materialism and was relegated to the steadily swelling red "Index Expurgatorius."

Incidentally, Zhdanov, who was isolated in Lenin-grad during the siege, has re-emerged as the ideological generalissimo of the Soviet Union, a role he played

before the war. He is now universally considered the number two man in the Party hierarchy while Molotov is Stalin's first deputy in the government. Should Stalin pass out of the picture, it is generally believed that the country would be run by a directory of which Molotov and Zhdanov would be the key men.

"The Soviet Man"

To adjust the post-war Soviet citizen to his new world, the Kremlin, under Zhdanov's generalship, has thrown its immense agitational apparatus into high gear. The Party and government machines have been purged of ideologically unsuitable officeholders, corruption and inefficiency ferreted out of high and low places, and all propaganda facilities organized to cultivate the freshest creation of Soviet literature — the Soviet Man, carefully distinguished from the Capitalist Man of the West.

The late President Mikhail Kalinin was the first since the German invasion of the U.S.S.R. to make the Russians publicly aware of their doctrinal and political isolation from the West. In a significant private address to Moscow District Party leaders in 1945, which was later published, Kalinin reminded them of the unique economic system of the Soviet Union and of the dangers of "capitalist encirclement." Although such dangers were recently declared by Stalin to be nonexistent, everything in Soviet propaganda points up the "perils" lurking beyond the frontier.

Russia's leading scientists, educators, and writers have organized themselves into a new "All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge," under the directorship of physicist Sergei Vavilov, president of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. The Society, launched early this summer, has already enlisted among its active members practically every articulate Soviet intellectual who can lecture or write. It has taken over the largest au-

ditoriums in the country and will develop a full program of adult education this autumn and winter.

President Vavilov has said that "systematic and intensive labor is required to raise the cultural level of the workers. Fully to eradicate the survivals of capitalism in the consciences of men we must struggle relentlessly and work energetically on the communist education of the people. . . .

"We propose," he continued, "to explain the foreign policy of the Soviet state, decisively to expose the *provocateurs* of new wars and aggressions, to unmask the falsehoods and limitations of bourgeois democracy, to show up the reactionary character of the ideology of the contemporary imperialistic bourgeoisie and its reformist lackeys [presumably social democrats]. . . . We must disclose the superiority of the Soviet social and political order over capitalism and the achievements of Soviet science, literature, art."

Soviet housecleaning

Zhdanov's housecleaning is not a phenomenon in any way comparable to the mass purges of 1936-1938, which involved the physical liquidation of the opposition, mass expulsions from the Party, and thousands of arrests. Little or no opposition to the regime is involved now.

The notorious epithet "enemy of the people" has not been heard since the tragic days of 1938. Arch-purist Zhdanov is simply doing a job neglected during the war. In the ideological field, at any rate, no cases of arrest are known. Writers and artists who have not toed the new cultural line have been simply reprimanded and given another chance.

Arrests are apparently confined to extreme cases of dereliction of duty by state officials who succumbed to wartime temptations when the law-enforcement machinery was inadequate, who took graft, falsified their accounts, or otherwise abused their offices. The economic purge is not under the jurisdiction of the security police but under the new Ministry for State Control.

Penalties, except in cases of embezzlement, are unusually mild for such offenses and ordinarily carry no political implications. It is a reflection of the maturity of the Soviet regime that violations of the law and mores which a few years ago would have been labeled "counterrevolutionary" and severely punished are now no longer considered as menacing the state. They are often dismissed as mere "survivals of capitalism."

The purge of the Party ranks is apparently nothing but an attempt to weed out members who entered between 1941 and 1944 when the rules were relaxed

to admit persons who had distinguished themselves in the war effort without reference to their ideological background. Thus the Party, which had been a fairly exclusive fraternity in 1939, with a membership of 3,800,000, grew to a total of nearly 6,000,000 in 1945. Upon investigation many of the new Communists were found deficient in political knowledge.

In the areas which had been under German occupation there was the additional factor of possible alien influence. In the Ukraine, for example, within two years after liberation, more than 50 per cent of the Party officials were replaced for inefficiency, incompetence, or Ukrainian nationalism.

The writers take their cues

The growth of nationalism was somewhat tolerated during the war, but soon after victory a return to the more orthodox Marxist attitudes was demanded. The latest manifestation of the campaign against what the Russians term "bourgeois" nationalism, as distinguished from the Soviet conception of "national consciousness," occurred at the July Congress of Soviet Writers.

At that time playwright Alexander Korneichuk, who is also a prominent member of the Ukrainian government, announced the expulsion from the Ukrainian Writers Union of the Jewish writer, Isaac Kipnis, for publishing stories with a Zionist bias. Zionism is still considered a form of Jewish chauvinism or "bourgeois" nationalism, in spite of the fact that the Soviet government in May officially declared its sympathy for a Jewish national state in Palestine.

The Congress of Writers also took stock of the literary situation since Zhdanov's 1946 order to rid literature of alien influences and found that the basis for his criticism had been removed. The delegates, of course, approved the Central Committee's condemnation of: —

1. General adulation of the West and subservience to foreign literary schools and forms.
2. Predominance of plays by foreign dramatists on the Soviet stage.
3. The portrayal of the Soviet Man as "primitive and uncultivated."
4. The "apoliticalness" of writers.

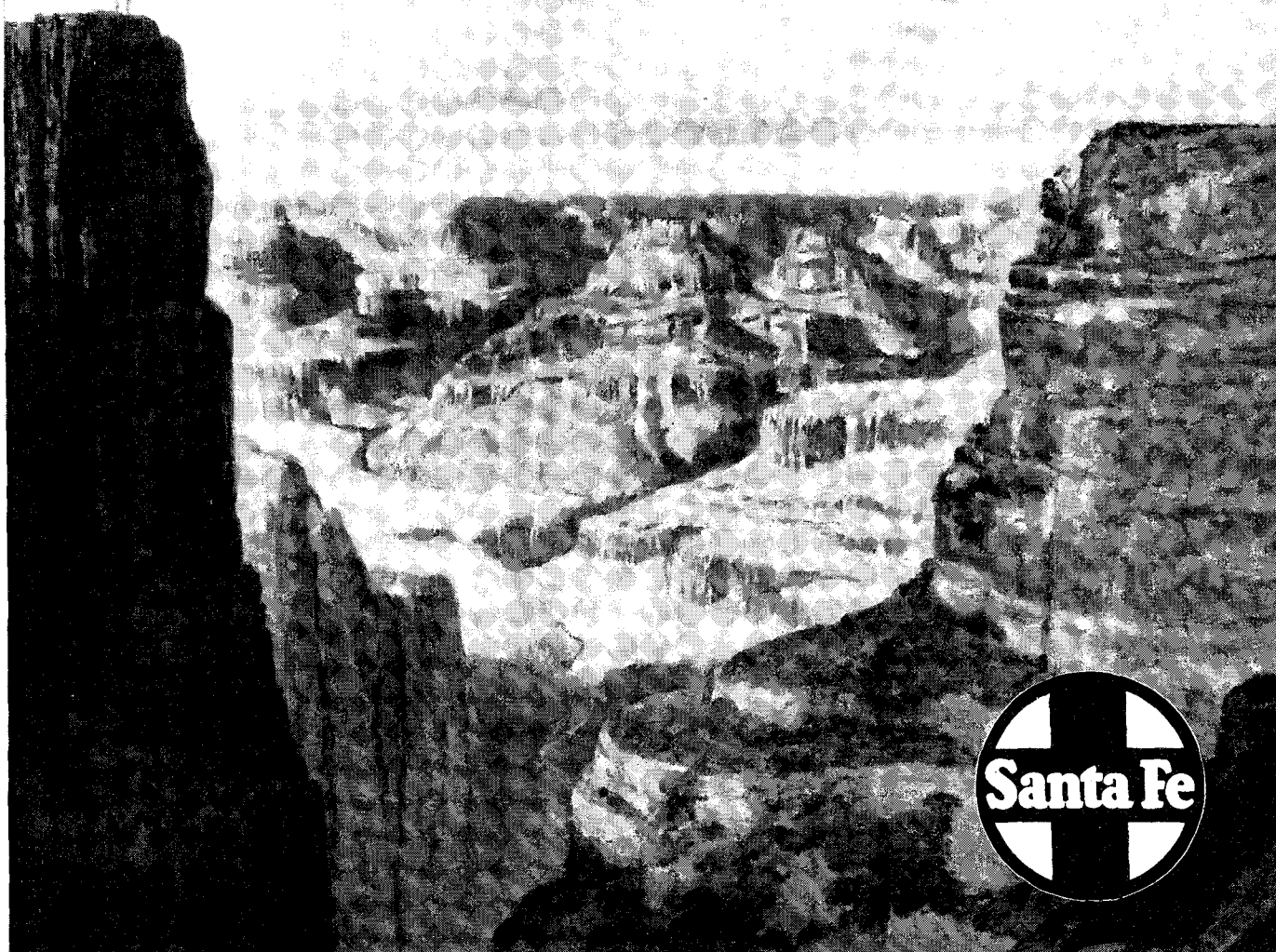
The Party now requires not only writers and artists, but musicians, scientists, and athletes to be politically conscious. Art for art's sake, sport for sport's sake, jazz for jazz's sake are equally taboo. The interests of the people, as defined by the Central Committee, must be served at all times. A writer must glorify the Soviet Man and Soviet patriotism.

Less than a year after Zhdanov's drastic directive the Congress of Writers has been able to list a sub-

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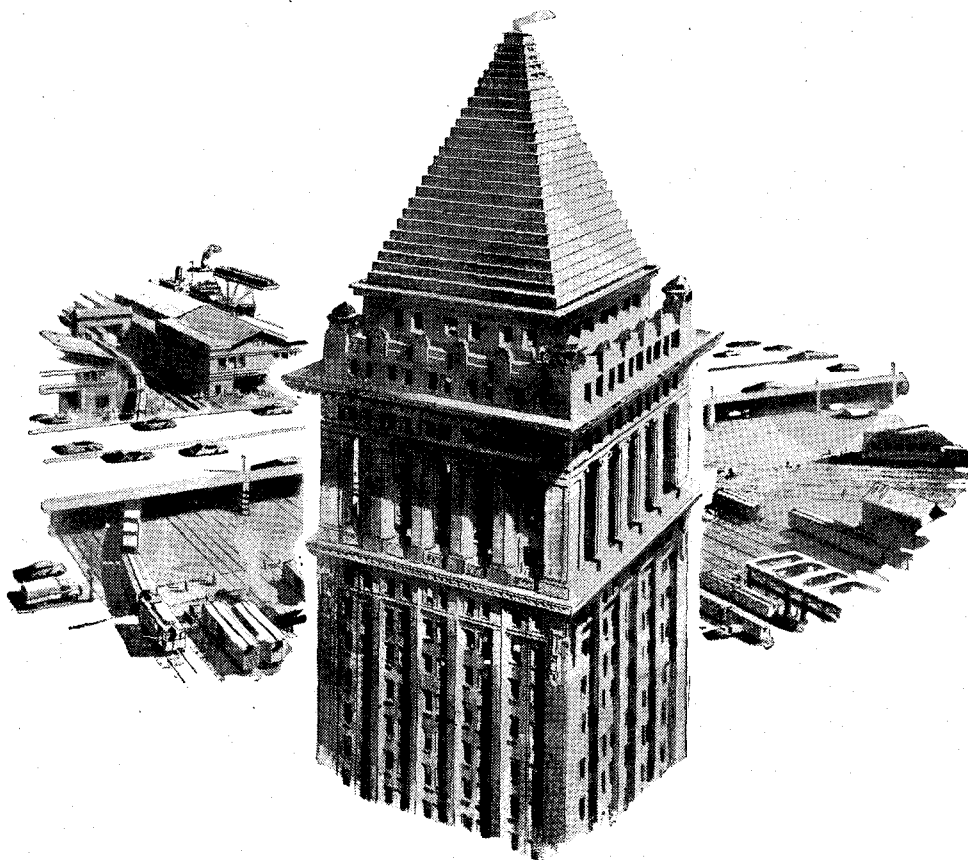


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stantial number of books in fulfillment of the new line. Among the outstanding examples are Ilya Ehrenburg's *The Tempest* and Konstantin Simonov's *Smoke of the Fatherland*. Ehrenburg's novel, whose plot covers wartime France and the Soviet Union, depicts Soviet culture as much superior to that of the West. In Simonov's book, the hero has lived in the United States and returns to find life in the Soviet Union much more attractive.

Simonov's play *The Russian Question*, which is devoted to the portrayal of the depravity of American journalism, is still a smash hit in hundreds of Soviet theaters. Royalties from the play, estimated in the thousands per day, have made the author the richest man in the Soviet Union. A more recent play with an American theme has been completed by Vadim Kozhevnikov. It is highly critical of American occupation policy in Italy.

The regimentation of youth

The Communist Party is making particular efforts to redirect the thinking of post-war youth. The training of youth is the special province of the Komsomol, the Young Communist League, which has an estimated membership of 20 millions. In a recent article Alexei Mikhailov, secretary-general of the Komsomol, argued that "spontaneity" could be no factor in such education because it "might open the door to the contamination of youth by bourgeois ideology, foreign to us."

Mikhailov expressed the fear that since the end of the war among part of the youth "there have begun to penetrate moods of demobilization, self-satisfaction, philistinism, moods in which the great social tasks facing the people tend to be forgotten. . . . Soil for such moods can arise only when there is no struggle against indifference to politics and the emptiness belched forth by reactionary, bourgeois culture and ideology."

Three decades after the Revolution, Soviet youth appears less regimented intellectually than German youth probably was soon after the advent of Hitler. Some of the official utterances quoted above have been precipitated by the intellectual and spiritual ferment among both the older and younger generation in the Soviet Union.

Normally, in the absence of ideological prodding, a rich escapist literature might have developed. But if Zhdanov and Mikhailov have their way, as they will, nothing like *A Farewell to Arms*, *Death of a Hero*, or *All Quiet on the Western Front* will be created.

Retreat and mysticism are being ruthlessly discouraged, and potentially disintegrating forces are being successfully combated by the urgency of reconstruction tasks and the "cultural offensive" on all the

fronts. The mood the Soviet leadership seeks to engender is expressed in the "March of Youth," a new, patriotic, popular song: —

There is no country on earth stronger than ours,
No spring is brighter than ours,
No sky brighter than ours,
No happiness fuller than ours,
No youth more beautiful than ours.

Is Russia looking through the curtain?

A series of significant articles appeared during the spring and summer in *Pravda* which caused some foreign observers to speculate on whether Russian theorists and tacticians are regaining their hope of revolution in Western countries. Such hopes were highest after World War I, particularly for countries like Germany, Italy, France.

On April 17, on the thirtieth anniversary of Lenin's return from Switzerland to Russia and the enunciation of the famous "April theses" on the Bolshevik seizure of power, B. Ponomarev wrote a long essay on the reasons for Lenin's success. Comparing the present "revolutionary" situation with the one after World War I, Ponomarev said: "Now, after World War II, the popular masses in foreign countries are also seeking 'a better social order.'"

"The old, pre-war order, characterized by the universal domination of monopoly capital, is fully bankrupt and the wounds inflicted by the war, by German occupation and the transition to peacetime economy, in conditions of planless, anarchistic production, are day by day bringing new sufferings to the people. The answer to the burning question as to which political order can best alleviate the sufferings of the people can be given only by the theory of scientific socialism, by the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin."

Later in the summer, Ponomarev wrote a series of articles in which he bitterly scored the policies of European socialist parties, especially in England and France. He accused them of preparing the ground for fascism and nazism in the past, of boycotting the united-front movements, and, finally, of "selling out" to the American, British, and French "reactionaries." Belatedly, he proposed a union of Western socialists and Communists in order to avoid a repetition of the events that followed World War I.

The suggestion for a new united front has not proved acceptable to British and French socialists. And with the advent of the Marshall Plan, and with its apparently wholehearted acceptance by the Western socialists, the gulf between them and the Communists has widened. An intensification of the ideological warfare between socialists and Communists on a world scale appears to be inevitable. It will not be surprising if a revival of the doctrine of world revolution follows.

Let's Wake Up Rip Van Winkle!

Millions of bushels of food may rot in our fields this harvest time, instead of being available to the world's markets—because we are short of freight cars. Here is a way that thousands of cars can be freed for service in a hurry.

ARE you interested in the price of food? Does it give you a twinge to see those pictures of mountains of wheat piled on the ground and potatoes going to rot—when there's a desperate world food crisis?

The bottle-neck is our freight-car shortage. But thousands of cars could be freed by a single decision—if old-line railroad managements would act.

Don't Blame the War!

This is hard to believe, but it's true: we have today only three-fourths as many freight cars in our country as we had twenty years ago. This shrunken fleet is now called on to handle the greatest peacetime traffic in history. And the war itself is not to blame for the shortage—for in no single year from 1925 to the start of hostilities did the railroad industry buy as many cars as it junked. Twenty years is a long time for even Rip Van Winkle to sleep!

What Can Be Done?

There is at least one remedy that can be applied at once—despite the steel shortage and other difficulties in car-building. This remedy requires no new equipment, no period of time—nothing but an act of management:

Lift what appear to be agreements between railroads that deliberately slow down freight trains!

Here is an example. There are eight important routes by which you can ship "fast" freight from California to Chicago. These routes vary in length as much as 450 miles. But, curiously, the time schedule for each of the eight is exactly 118 hours—and 30 minutes!

Similarly, scheduled freight trains moving west over the important routes from Chicago to the Coast areas, despite great differences in terrain and mileage, take exactly 130 hours—on the nose!

Is This Free Competition?

Could it be that these schedules are fixed by agreement? That the trains



Are old-line managements asleep in the dell while many freight trains creep at a snail's pace—by agreement?

which could be fastest are held back for the slowest—so that no road can have even the slightest competitive advantage?

Railroad men know that, in many instances, a whole day could be cut off these schedules between California and Chicago—if managements would simply order it. If that were done, on these roads and on others, it would ease the national car shortage at once!

There is good reason to believe that by lifting deliberate freight slow-downs, on the roads that still practice them, we could provide more cars this summer and fall than our shops can possibly build. And every car is desperately needed!

A Call For Action!

The next few weeks will be the critical ones in our food problem. Our wheat crop is estimated to exceed any previous record by 300 million bushels. *It is even now being piled in the fields—for want of cars.*

If you feel as strongly about this as the C&O does, write to your newspaper and your congressman.

Ask them to stir up Rip Van Winkle—and tell him that time is short. Demand that our trains be scheduled not merely to suit the private deals of the railroads, but so that we can make the best use, for the whole public, of our depleted stock of freight cars!

The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway

Terminal Tower, Cleveland 1, Ohio

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



Washington

DOLLAR crisis" is a shorthand phrase for the real trouble in Western Europe. This is a crisis outside American production. Recovery has been so delayed that world exporters to European countries cannot get in return the goods they need. Accordingly they insist on payment in dollars out of Europe's dwindling store so that they can buy in America. Even the Russians are selling for dollars, and the trading structure of the world is becoming more and more lopsided.

The disappearance of British coal from the export market remains a prime factor in Europe's present impasse. Newspaper correspondents in Washington well remember the review for their benefit that Mr. Bevin gave a year ago in the British Embassy on the Laborite plan for coal. He said that coal which formerly was exported would be poured into domestic factories producing manufactured goods for export. That was the British Labor Government's plan for earning the requisite foreign exchange for imports of necessary food.

At the time, few of Bevin's listeners in Washington realized the implications of his statement. Nor, apparently, did he, for now he is demanding from British miners 30 million tons of exportable coal with which to bargain his way in European diplomacy.

Left-wing Britons have charged that American criticisms of Laborite England have been ideological, that they have been dictated by anti-socialism. It would be nearer the mark to say they have been directed not at the nationalization of the Labor Government's program but at its nationalism. It was the unrealistic nature of that program in terms of European revival that irked officialdom in Washington. The Marshall Plan is an effort to restore the "working economy" of Europe from the devastation wrought by the war and by post-war nationalism.

Before World War I, British mines shipped abroad, mainly to Europe, 50 per cent of world coal exports. Before the last war the British ratio was 37 per cent. Now it is zero, and coal is being carried to Newcastle at \$22 a ton. In the year that ended June 30, Europe received from the United States 25½ million tons of coal and coke at a cost of over 500 million dollars.

Now that the crisis is here, British comment echoes what officials in Washington have been saying for two years past. "British miners," says the London *Economist*, "could have saved Europe \$500 million by working one hour a day more than they worked in May and June." This journal goes on to say that to the United States "round phrases" from Europe ring hollow "if the French will not produce food, if the Germans are not allowed to produce steel, and above all if the British refuse to export coal." Nothing would more accurately reproduce the state of mind in Washington.

Representative of American business's point of view is the comment of Lewis H. Brown, head of Johns-Manville Corporation, who says that if America must supply an added loan to Great Britain or help through the Marshall Plan in the way of food and war material to alleviate Britain's crisis, then Britain's contribution to the Marshall Plan and the recovery of Western Europe should be to dig and export coal and to postpone further nationalization of industry until she can nationalize at her own expense and not at the expense of American taxpayers.

Forrestal and the Air Force

The team that will administer a law which, in the words of Secretary Forrestal, represents "the most decisive step" for the nation (that is, unification of the armed services) is now complete. Mr. Forrestal himself, as the first Secretary of Defense, has a herculean job, but he is the best man for it. As former

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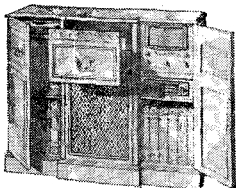
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WASHINGTON (continued)

Secretary of the Navy he can be counted upon to assuage the ruffled feelings of the Navy, particularly of Naval aviation.

Several of the top men in Naval aviation refused to be reconciled to the new setup, and they have been transferred out of Washington. They have some grounds for complaint. Under the National Security Act the Air Force Department has been given a complete monopoly of strategic air warfare and the maintenance of air supremacy. Naval aviation feels completely left out. In the Navy Department, aviation will be under the thumb of surface-minded admirals instead of being allowed to contribute to the Air Force Department its own techniques in air warfare.

After a while Secretary Forrestal may be able to release Naval aviation from its present restrictions. Or he may be able to enlarge the concepts of the Air Force with a view to preventing that organization from becoming a prisoner of the ideas it developed during the war.

The ideas of the Army Air Forces have attained the status of dogmas as the result of wartime competition with Naval aviation. They start off with the assumption of the superiority of land-based planes. All the arguments of the Air Force flow from this thesis.

Forrestal's organization greatly needs a financial undersecretary. The apportionment of appropriations among his three departments is bound to be his most ticklish job. Without some such shield the appropriations for our military weapons will be determined by Budget Bureau officials who have little information and little understanding of the effect of those weapons on strategy and tactics.

Whether these problems are in Secretary Forrestal's mind is anybody's guess, for in these infant stages of his organization Forrestal is keeping his own counsel. The guess is that they are. For Forrestal, of all men, has what William James calls a "pungent sense of reality," and one feels sure that even now he has arrived at an over-all sense of responsibility. That he was never in the hands of the admirals is indicated by the fact that he himself cut the Gordian knot that for long and contentious months kept the armed services apart on unification.

Forrestal's aides

Secretary Forrestal will be helped by a trio of loyal administrators. They all respect him. But none of them is of his caliber, though the Navy's John L. Sullivan, who has a vigor which promises the clearing out of Navy deadwood, is capable of much growth. The Air Department's Stuart Symington, formerly chief of the Surplus Property Administration, is a buddy of President Truman's. He is a conformist who will go along with the Air Force.

Kenneth C. Royall, to whom goes the honor of being the last Secretary of War as well as the first Secretary

of the Army, is a North Carolinian with political ambitions. His best recommendation is that he enjoyed the confidence of Secretary Patterson.

As Secretary of War he added both to French jitteriness about our intentions in Germany and to the feeling abroad that our foreign policy lacks cohesiveness. This he did in Paris by denying the State Department's announcement of a conference with the French on the level of industry in Germany. He inherits from his predecessor a passion for universal military service.

How many investigations?

Doubtless Senator Brewster regrets the day he insisted on the maintenance of the War Investigating Committee of which he is chairman. He and the subcommittee chairman, Senator Ferguson, got such a drubbing at the hands of Howard Hughes during the aircraft inquiry that the prestige of the Committee suffered irreparable damage.

The trouble is that the prestige of Congress itself has likewise been hurt. In consequence, there will probably be much support in Congress for the recommendation of the La Follette-Monroney Committee (which was responsible for the reorganization act passed by the Seventy-ninth Congress) to wind up all special committees of Congress.

The basic theory on which the reorganization of Congress was effected required that whenever an investigation is found to be necessary or desirable, it shall be conducted by the committee which has responsibility for shaping legislation in that particular sphere. In the matter of war contracts the appropriate committees are the House and Senate Committees on the Armed Services.

Special committees are likely to be laws unto themselves, but investigation subcommittees of standing committees can always be kept under discipline by the committee chairmen, if not by Congress itself. The other leftover special committee, the House Un-American Activities Committee, should go into the same oblivion that seems to be marked out for the War Investigating Committee, and for the same reason.

Congress under Republican leadership added four special committees to these two leftovers. This deviation from legislative reform brings up the question of Congressional performance under the La Follette-Monroney Act.

Representative Monroney considers that fourteen changes effected by the act are operating fairly well. These include the realignment of committees, improvement of committee procedure, reduction of private bills, strengthening of the legislative draft-

ing services, improvement of the *Congressional Record*, increased pay for legislators, and registration of lobbyists.

But there were many dismal failures. They were mainly due to the clinging to old custom by the House Committee on Appropriations. First, this committee denied itself an adequate staff to scrutinize the 35-billion-dollar Federal Budget; and second, it refused to open its hearings to the public as the law requires and as all other committees did. Thus the majority of legislators were prevented from knowing anything about items in the appropriation bill until the day they were reported to the House.

Moreover, the legislative budget provided for under the new law did not get a trial, nor did other fiscal control measures. The proposed legislative budget was designed to chart a financial course for the year to be followed as closely as possible, as an alternative to the practice of passing isolated appropriations and revenue bills. It was a deadlock between House and Senate that left Congress without such a guiding policy of its own. The reformers intend to keep up the pressure for a legislative budget as well as the other measures enacted in the legislative reorganization act.

THE MOOD OF THE CAPITAL

The Capital was full of doubt when the President made the statement that a special session of Congress was unnecessary. The crisis in the world is now at razor's edge — politically with Russia, economically with the rest of the world. Deterioration seems to be going on faster than pacification and reconstruction. It had been the determination that there should be no more of what Senator Flanders calls "crisis legislation," but the feeling is that events are forcing crisis measures pending the working out of the Marshall Plan.

On the Executive side, the activity of the three Presidential committees in figuring out what the country can afford to give and lend to Europe is unabated. Originally there was to be no connection between this activity and Europe's activity in Paris, the main reason being our anxiety to ward off the Russian charge that America is dictating to Europe.

But when the European conference appeared to be more concerned with relief than with reconstruction, it was decided to do some nudging on the spot in Paris, with the view of promoting a European plan that would reduce the contemplated expense to America and at the same time meet the Marshall proposal for an integrated European economy. Congressmen are withholding comment pending the return from Europe of the Herter groups.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



The Middle East

NO further exposition of the Palestine issue is likely to add much illumination to the struggle there. The critical struggle is the test of the strength and influence of the Arab bloc in the United Nations.

It is crucial not only because the Palestine issue, understandably, is the most important in the Arab League program, but primarily because the show-down on it will reveal both the real extent of the great powers' interest in Arab friendship and the true weight of the Arabs' bargaining strength based on their oil and on their strategic position.

But we should remember that the future course of Arab nationalism is yet to be decided. In World War I, nationalist sentiment was a source of aid and security for the Allies. In the war just ended, it was a distinct psychological liability which bordered on very real danger. If in the future it turns into a movement of hatred and fanaticism using Western techniques to resist the encroachment and challenge of the West, this will be a dark reaction indeed.

There is a strong disposition in Great Britain to evacuate and leave untenable powers and contradictory mandates to others willing and able to finance and to struggle with the solution of the problem. Oliver Stanley expressed a view on which many conservatives and left-wingers in Britain agree when he remarked in Commons recently that the only alternative to partition was evacuation.

Given this disposition on the part of a greatly weakened Britain, plus plans, now freely discussed, to move GHQ Middle East Land Forces to Kenya, and to base its defenses and the new Commonwealth lifeline on Kenya rather than Suez, it becomes plain that the assumptions on which United States policy in the Mediterranean has rested must be revised once more.

Whatever support it has been possible to muster in this country for taking up positions relinquished by Britain in Greece and Turkey has certainly not yet extended to American protection of Palestine or any of its neighbors.

The alternative prospect of an international force taking over in Palestine — at least for an appreciable period — presents equally great complications. It seems a safe guess therefore that the Western powers will not encourage the complete abandonment of Palestine by Britain — even if she be criticized.

Here the sharp cleavage between East and West must modify any solution based on local issues. Thus the total withdrawal of Britain could be used by her as a threat over the Arabs, who would consequently be exposed to the much feared Jewish defense forces, and to the other Western powers having oil and strategic interests in the Middle East.

Because the matter of oil arises so often in Middle East politics, particularly in relation to Palestine, it is illuminating to note in passing that before the oil problem existed the basic arguments regarding Zionism were the same arguments now before the world. Admittedly, oil politics complicate the situation. Similarly communications and air rights are vital factors in Middle East affairs. But more fundamental, because it bears on the future of Arab nationalism, is the recognition of Arab rights in an era of awakened political consciousness in the Arab countries.

More water for Sudan

It simplifies the Sudan issue, for Americans, to find that it actually revolves to a large extent around questions of water rights. The Egyptians have four ambitious projects for dam building and irrigation to increase their cultivable area for their rapidly expanding and poverty-ridden population. Only one

of these, the project for making Lake Tana a reservoir by building a dam at the headwaters of the Blue Nile in Abyssinia, would benefit the Sudanese.

The Egyptians profess to believe that an Anglo-Sudanese or an independent Sudanese government would block this project or its control. They brush aside an existing agreement whereby Egypt already has first claim on any water drawn from the Nile.

Britain, absorbed by more active troubles elsewhere, has not yet clarified this matter publicly. Nor has she seen the value in taking the lead in making such a project a rallying point for Sudanese interest. Her emphasis on setting up more representative government for the Sudanese, while ignoring the possibilities in concrete objectives understandable to them, seems inept. Britain's only suggestion so far in regard to the UN case is that a committee survey the Sudan — a proposal likely to leave the overinvestigated Arabs cold.

Democracy in the Levant

The current preoccupation of the United States with Middle East oil draws attention to reports of recent discoveries of oil in both Syria and Lebanon. Whether oil is there in commercial quantities has not yet been made known; but it is obvious that any real development of these discoveries will alter the economies of these two struggling new republics so advantageously as to protect them from the twin horrors they profess to dread: dollar diplomacy and Soviet attrition.

Meanwhile, in their first elections held since their liberation from the French mandate they have maintained the façade, at least, of democracy. The Lebanese elections seem to have been strong-armed to keep the Khoury government in power. However, the threat of the return of pro-French elements to power was averted, and whatever its internal divisions, Lebanon maintains constitutional processes and a reasonably democratic pattern.

The pattern in Syria is less imitative of the West; more a matter of Damascus keeping the upper hand over Aleppo and the area to the north. Nevertheless, under skillful guidance from British advisers, Syria is utilizing some of the tools of industrial and agricultural development. A wheat-growing country with an exportable surplus, it is capable of becoming self-sustaining to a degree scarcely imaginable in Lebanon.

British experts engaged by the Syrian government have made a recent survey of Syrian resources. Veterans of the wartime Middle East Supply Center furnish much of the technical assistance needed. Here the British are showing adaptability to realities. Instead of making a purely political approach, they offer to a rising Arab country the kind of help it

needs, on its terms. Their influence is correspondingly growing in Syria at present.

Greater Syria

If international power politics overshadow the Palestine issue and the technical questions of Middle East oil development, they play an equally important part in the maneuvers emanating from Amman in Trans-Jordan. There King Abdullah, son of the great Feisal, cherishes the dream of reigning over the whole of historic Syria — namely, Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, and the Arab sections of Palestine.

Abdullah was the only Arab leader who came out unreservedly for Britain during the war. For this and kindred reasons Britain looks kindly on his aspirations. Whatever divisions there may be among Foreign Office experts on the wisdom of encouraging the Greater Syria plan at this time, that office is not going to abandon Abdullah.

Last summer a White Paper was issued in Amman on "Greater Syria," giving the historical justifications for Abdullah's plan. There are frequent suggestions in the British press that the plan not only would help to solve the Palestine problem but would satisfy a longing shared by many Moslems for unification and solidarity. Yet Abdullah has to move gently. Syrian leaders express themselves for "Syrian unity" which envisions union with Trans-Jordan. They would willingly take back the Moslem areas of Lebanon. But they will not be swallowed by Abdullah.

Realization of the Greater Syria scheme may be accelerated if it becomes clear to the Arabs that their faith in the UN is misplaced and that they must make other arrangements for security. Then their only practical course would be to consolidate their defenses and ally themselves with some bloc or power.

The Russians edge back

Reports from Teheran indicate renewed Russian activity as the Majlis, the Iranian Parliament, reconvened. Among the issues to come before it are the country's application for a loan from the International Bank, of which it is a member, and the ratification of the oil concession signed with Russia last year while Russian troops were still in Azerbaijan.

It will be remembered that among the proposed terms of this concession there are provisions for the exclusion of all non-Russian concerns from northern Iran and for the formation of a joint Russo-Iranian company to explore the mineral resources of the area. In this company the Soviet government would hold at least 51 per cent of the shares and would participate proportionately in the profits for the first twenty-five years of the fifty years the concession is to run. In the view of most Iranians the Russian interpretation of these terms will amount to a reoccupation.

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AMERICA'S FINEST YEAR 'ROUND CLIMATE

THE MIDDLE EAST (*continued*)

It is true that the Russians withdrew last year and that resistance by the Russian-supported group in Azerbaijan collapsed on the approach of Premier Ghavam's troops in December. Many saw in these events a major setback for the Russians. Others on the scene were convinced that the Russians had something up their sleeves. All conceded that it was probable that the Russians would be back; and it must be admitted that there is no objection per se in their seeking ratification of a proposed agreement. It all depends on the approach.

Conceivably because of the present antagonism towards the Soviets in Iran and the popular outcry for better terms at least, Ghavam has been attempting to get a much more favorable deal than he entered into under duress last year. But it seems likely that some sort of agreement will be reached favorable to the Soviets.

American interests in the Persian Gulf

With the abrogation of the so-called "Red Line Agreement," which prevented the participants from further exploration and development in the Persian Gulf without privity of each other, the Middle East situation regarding the exploration and development of oil properties in the Gulf area has been radically altered.

The remaining lands thought to be oil-bearing may now be open to all comers, including those formerly bound by the restrictive covenant. Most of the "comers" will be American, and it seems probable, therefore, that the British policy of exclusiveness in the Persian Gulf area will be further revised.

Lately, we may note that Prince Saif al Islam Abdullah of Yemen and the sons of two leaders in that country have been touring the United States in a plane of the Phillips Petroleum Company, a major stockholder of the newly organized \$100,000,000 American Independent Oil Company formed for the purpose of asserting the right of the independents to a place in Middle East oil. According to a company official it is hoped that before long the Imam of Yemen will end the almost absolute isolation of his country and permit exploration for oil.

The Russians are interested, as is the United States. Thus Yemen's admission to membership in the United Nations in August was not unexpected; nor was it the subject of argument.

In the field of power politics, United States intervention in the Middle East embodied in the implementation of the Truman Doctrine is considered, by the Arabs, of historic importance. And since the Arab countries are fully conscious of their pivotal position, the ever growing cleavage between the Soviet Union and the Western powers fills them with justified apprehension. There is little they can do about it; but there is a lot they might do or refrain from doing if and when a showdown comes. This is doubtless understood at Lake Success.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



Latin America

THE United States delegation to the Inter-American Foreign Ministers' Conference at Petropolis won a limited victory. It held the line, despite considerable opposition, for a mutual defense treaty among the American republics against aggressors from within or without the Hemisphere.

The delegation beat down Argentina's demand for unanimity in all important decisions on Hemisphere defense. And Argentina's equally sinister desire to leave each American republic free to choose its own methods of defending its neighbors, after any decision had run the unanimity gantlet, hardly reached the stage of public expression.

The U.S. delegation adroitly postponed to the regular Pan American Conference scheduled for Bogotá in January all issues not directly related to Hemisphere defense. Cuba's frantic and justifiable squawks about the effect on her economy of the new United States sugar quotas were passed over to the tangled future. So were the requests of a considerable number of Latin American republics — a kind of "Cuban bloc," it appeared — for a showdown on Hemisphere economic coöperation.

At Petropolis, talk of establishing a kind of Hemisphere "Marshall Plan" was in the air. But the U.S. delegation and friends from the less economically troubled or more economically expectant republics saw to it that, until Bogotá at least, in the air is where it will stay.

Likewise passed over to Bogotá was the delicate question of who will get arms from the United States, from its shrinking treasury of missiles and weapons, and how much. The statesmen at Petropolis were concentrating on the ideals of Hemisphere defense arrangements, not on their practicalities. And the question of drafting a regional constitution for the

inter-American system — after fifty-seven years of Pan-American organization — was not seriously put forward. That has been on the Bogotá agenda for a long time.

From Chapultepec to Petropolis

The quarry stalked and brought back from Petropolis is officially christened the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. The meeting which produced it now goes down in Pan-American annals as the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security. It, in turn, was provided for by the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace held in Mexico City early in 1945 — known as the Chapultepec Conference.

The Chapultepec Conference itself drafted a program of Hemisphere defense and put it essentially into effect through wartime agreements between the foreign offices and the executive departments of the governments in the Western Hemisphere. Most of the Petropolis treaty simply repeats the Chapultepec agreements, and adapts them, functionally, to governments operating on a peacetime basis.

Such adaptations are considerably involved. First, the Petropolis treaty had to be adapted to twenty-one governments, all of which are acutely sensitive on points of sovereignty. It had to be adapted to governments like our own, where the decision to wage war and many other major decisions in foreign policy reside in an elected Congress; and to governments which are all but dictatorships. Above all, the treaty-makers had to take into consideration that many American governments, ours included, fear commitments which enable other governments to involve them in war.

Within the limitations, the Reciprocal Assistance Treaty deals ostensibly with two, but actually with

three, kinds of attack or aggression against the peace of the Western Hemisphere.

1. Armed attacks upon American powers from without the Hemisphere.
2. Aggressions against the peace of the Hemisphere by American powers committing acts of war or aggressions against each other.
3. Aggressions against the Hemisphere's peace from "extra-continental conflict," not immediately involving the Americas in a military sense; or actions by powers from within or without the Hemisphere not involving armed attack; or "by any other fact or situation that might endanger" the Hemisphere's security.

Plainly enough these provisions would sanction the American republics in taking joint action against belligerents in a war on other continents; against overseas governments attempting to apply undue economic or political pressure on any American nation; or in the event that any peace-endangering "fact or situation" arose out of, say, an attack on United States security bases far outside the Western Hemisphere, as in the South Pacific.

Disciplining an aggressor

In the case of an armed attack from overseas on any American state or its Western Hemisphere possessions, procedure is simple. The American governments agree "to assist in meeting the attack" until an inter-American consultation can be held to decide on permanent modes of joint action.

There is, however, one joker in this assistance arrangement. Until the consultation meets, each power may determine the "immediate measure" by which it will extend assistance to the attacked neighbor. It may throw its full military power into the struggle. On the other hand, if Ruritania should happen to be the aggressor, it can equally meet its engagements and presumably satisfy its conscience by writing a note of casual disapprobation to the Ruritanian Foreign Minister.

The treaty provides that the "organ of consultation" must meet without delay. And the organ of consultation is a conference of the Foreign Ministers of the American republics which have ratified the Petropolis treaty. When the Foreign Ministers' conference meets, its job will be to decide on the joint course of action which the American nations will take toward the attacker or aggressor. Here the Petropolis treaty allows for half a dozen or more courses of action.

The Foreign Ministers may try to discipline the aggressor simply by recalling American chiefs of diplomatic missions from his capital. Or they may completely break diplomatic relations, or both diplomatic and consular relations. Or they may go fur-

ther and partially or entirely suspend economic relations with the aggressor — cut off his trade and supplies from the Americas. Next, they may interrupt all his communication with the Americas. Finally, the Foreign Ministers' conference may recommend the use of the inter-American armed forces.

But along these paths of action, too, there are jokers. It takes a two-thirds vote, rather than a simple majority, of the governments represented at a Foreign Ministers' consultation, to decide on an operating method against an aggressor. Then the decision shall be binding upon all parties to the treaty unless the decision calls for the use of armed force. No government can be compelled to fight an aggressor against another American power.

Taken together the concessions whittle the treaty down into something considerably less than an all-out defensive alliance. Governments nominally complying with the decisions of a Foreign Ministers' council to break diplomatic, economic, or cultural relations with an aggressor would be able to carry out their treaty commitments with lip service rather than with effective action, as Argentina carried out many commitments to Hemisphere "solidarity" in World War II.

Boundaries of the Western Hemisphere

An outstanding achievement at Petropolis was to redefine and expand the boundaries of the Western Hemisphere. From the North to the South Pole the Hemisphere's security is guaranteed by such protection as the treaty offers; including the entire continental land mass, Antarctica, the Aleutian Islands, Newfoundland, and Greenland. The Hawaiian Islands technically are not placed in the Hemisphere defense area. But their case is covered by a clause providing that an attack on the "territory" of any American power is to be considered an aggression.

Iceland was left out, apparently out of deference to Soviet Russia's sensitivity concerning spheres of defensive interest. But under the treaty's vague generalizations regarding aggressions not directly involving attacks on Hemisphere territory, a case could be made for an all-American coalition to prevent anything unpleasant happening to Iceland.

Although Panamanian Foreign Minister Ricardo Alfaro specifically maintained that the treaty-makers had not drafted an "alliance" against Russia, nothing in the Petropolis model could manifestly discourage Soviet Russia from constructing by ostensibly similar democratic processes a potent regional defensive edifice in Eastern Europe. Such a common front could, as the Petropolis treaty explicitly does, maintain that everything was being arranged in full accord with the regional collective security provisions of the United Nations Charter.

ATLANTIC

Repartee

LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

"Are Americans Polygamous?"

Sir:

Congratulations on the publication of David L. Cohn's "Are Americans Polygamous?" in your August issue.

Not for several years have I had the pleasure of reading such a constructive, thought-provoking article. In his timely and sincere appraisal of one of the most serious current social problems in America, Mr. Cohn has made a monumental contribution to the thinking of people throughout the nation.

The forthright writing and thinking exemplified in Mr. Cohn's article continue to make the *Atlantic* my most valued reading from month to month.

RICHARD G. LEECH
*Captain, Air Corps, Sherman Field
Fort Leavenworth, Kan.*

Sir:

I think David L. Cohn's analysis is discerning and based on clear thinking. However, the existing laws are an expression of opinion not of 1947 but of the years when they were passed. I believe that when we have evaluated what really counts in our civilization, we shall find the pendulum swinging back to a more stable family life based not on the double standard nor on hypocrisy, as our family life was at the turn of the century, but on the practicability which will evolve out of the trial and error of emotional smashups.

MRS. L. E. SWEANY
Carroll, Iowa

Sir:

I have just finished reading David Cohn's article and found it very interesting indeed. However, it seems to me that the author stresses the fault of the male in the situations he describes. Why hasn't he taken into consideration the great "emancipation" (so-called) of the American woman? It would appear that the more independence and self-sufficiency the modern woman shows has a direct re-

lation to the divorce rate. I do not wish to give the impression that I deplore the advanced status of the female in our country. Instead, I should enjoy reading an article which would try to analyze the increasing divorce rate with the above thoughts in view. A comparison with other countries, keeping in mind the status of the female in those countries, should be quite revealing.

VICTOR BLATT
Yonkers, N.Y.

Sir:

I think Mr. Cohn hits the nail on the head when he brings in our adolescence as a people as one of the primary causes of our high divorce rate.

The only trouble is, as with his book *Love in America*, all this seems a little glib from a man who has never tried marriage. Is the "impartial observer" really the better judge? I don't know — I just wonder. How about some more on the same subject from a married man, or a married or unmarried woman, or all three, with some ideas to contribute?

MARION W. ALLEN
Rockville Centre, N.Y.

Sir:

I thought David Cohn's article timely and interesting. It made me wonder if perhaps we are not in some transition stage. Among my friends and relatives there are so many homes that are purely matriarchal. Even when a woman with children marries again, she is still likely to be the matriarch in the new setup.

As for the men being polygamous — why, every man is a Barkis.

(MRS.) MILDRED T. WOOD
Hyampom, Calif.

Sir:

Excellent article! If American men took their businesses as lightly as they do marriage — well,

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AT 10

draw your own conclusions. This, beside the moral point at issue, is something to think about.

FLORENCE L. MARTIN
Chicago, Ill.

India's Birth Rate

Sir:

In regard to William Vogt's criticism in *Atlantic* Repartee (August) of Douglas Dickins's article, "A Thousand Rupees for a Life" (June *Atlantic*), I should like to point out a serious error in mathematics and Mr. Vogt's apparent ignorance of the nature of population change.

Granting Mr. Vogt's contention that the population of India has increased from 250,125,000 in 1881 to 420,000,000 in 1947, the per cent increase during this period has been somewhat less than 60 per cent. This is easily determined.

The decade increase from 1872 to 1881 has been variously estimated. Dr. Kingsley Davis of the Population Research Institute at Princeton University has set it at about 5 per cent for the decade. His estimate is supported by the fact that the great increase in Indian population has been from 1921 to the present. In this case the total increase from 1872 to 1947, which Mr. Vogt says is "in the order of more than 100 per cent," is actually no more than 74 per cent.

From these calculations Mr. Vogt goes on to state that Indians increase with "the irresponsibility of codfish" in carrying on what he calls "unrestrained spawning."

Population increase is a result of changes in either birth or death rate. It has been determined, again by Mr. Davis, that there has been, if any change, a slight decline in the Indian birth rate since 1917. But the death rate has been substantially decreased, principally by the introduction of Western methods of control over important causes of death such as violence, famine, and various diseases.

There is a very serious population problem in India. But it is very clear that it is not the result of any codfish tendencies among Indians. No reasonable approach to its solution, I am sure, can be made from either exaggerated statistics or Mr. Vogt's name-calling.

JO W. SAXE
Germantown, Pa.

Sir:

Mr. Saxe's chief quarrel with me seems to rest on interpretation of the population increase in India prior to 1881. Since no one has reliable data, I should not labor the point; but even accepting his figures, the population increase has been two and a half times the amount given by Mr. Dickins. And what happened in the 1870's does not seem very important in view of the 15 per cent increase — greater than the total population of the British Isles — in the 1930's.

Nor does the fall in birth rate of three tenths of one per cent in fifty-five years seem very significant, in a discussion of India's population problem; its ingenuousness reminds me of the old story of the

marriage broker who claimed that his client was "just a little bit pregnant"! If the maintenance of the world's highest birth rate, in one of the world's most overpopulated countries, where the average calorie intake is less than 1000 per day, is not irresponsible breeding, Mr. Saxe and I are at a semantic impasse.

As for his charge of name-calling, I am at a loss. Can it be that he considers "economist" a term of obloquy?

WILLIAM VOGT
Washington, D.C.

Charles Dickens's Brother

Sir:

Augustus Dickens, to whom Wilfred Partington refers in his article, "Should a Biographer Tell?" (August *Atlantic*), was once employed by the Illinois Central Railroad at Chicago, as a clerk in the Land Department in 1865. He applied to the Superintendent of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad at Burlington, Iowa, on March 22, 1865, for a position in the Land Department of that railroad and stated the fact that he was a brother of Charles Dickens. His application was not acted upon favorably, evidently because the road was not prepared at that time to push an advertising campaign for land sales, preferring to wait until it had completed the construction of the road from Ottumwa to the Missouri River, which would enhance the value of its land grants.

In the book *Burlington West*, published by the Harvard University Press in 1941, on pages 211 and 212, a photostatic copy of Mr. Dickens's letter is shown. He states that he has "picked up a smattering of literary ability that might be useful in getting up land pamphlets, etc."

At that time he had been employed by the Illinois Central Railroad for five years.

ORIEN W. FIFER
Indianapolis, Ind.

I Personally —

Sir:

As just another enthusiast for the superlatively brilliant article by Cord Meyer, Jr., "What Price Preparedness?" (June *Atlantic*), I was completely dumfounded by Merle H. Mertz's reaction, in the August Repartee, to that article. How anyone could smell in it an urge to advance Communism in the United States is definitely beyond me.

As I read the article, all Mr. Meyer has done is to prove, by objective and irrefutable logic, that in atomic warfare the defender will be forced to adopt complete totalitarian regimentation to withstand a totalitarian attack (quite possibly that of a Communistic government). The conclusion would certainly seem to be that, whereas defeat by a totalitarian power and the regimentation required to withstand the attack of such a power are about

equally undesirable and terrifying, it would be a quite bright idea not to have an atomic war in the first place.

Having established an inescapable conclusion as premise for the next problem — how is atomic warfare to be avoided? — Mr. Meyer is forced, in an "impossible" international situation, to fall back, with all men of good will, upon a hope and a faith that somewhere, somehow, a solution to so terrible a dilemma may be found. If Mr. Mertz will concentrate on helping to find such a solution he will be doing a great deal more to perpetuate the concept of individual freedom held by considerably more than 99 per cent of the American people, including, I rather suspect, the *Atlantic*, than by yelling "Communism" just because, for a change, someone (in this case a former Marine) happened really to think.

PAUL F. ROLLER
Berkeley, Calif.

Sir:

The three letters in the July Atlantic Repartee, decrying Martha Gellhorn's "Miami-New York, 1944" (May issue), aroused my interest, so I searched out the May issue and read the story, which I had somehow skipped before. I thought it was beautifully written and sensitively realized, and not the least "decadent" or "dirty." One of the critics even doubted that such an incident could take place! Cambridge, Massachusetts, must be a truly isolated Eden.

I was amused, too, by the remark about "The Carnival" (May *Atlantic*): "there are such people . . . but we don't associate with them." May I suggest that the reader observe his friends, and the children of his friends, more closely.

MRS. ROBERT A. BOLSTER
Rochester, N.Y.

Sir:

Maybe the difficulty your correspondent V. E. Colyer (August Repartee) had in understanding Arnold J. Toynbee's article, "Civilization on Trial," in the June *Atlantic* lies in his basic primary education.

Contrary to Mr. Colyer, I found, in reading Mr. Toynbee's thought-provoking material, that the contributory qualifying clauses clarified the main idea and indicated the factors which the author had considered in bringing that idea to a focus.

We are not pap-fed for life. As we grow physically, a variety of foods is gradually added to our menu. It seems to me that anyone who could sit down and, ignoring the content of sentences, count the number of words which an author uses in each, should be "reading" the comic strips, rather than the *Atlantic*.

MRS. KATELLA G. M. LEWIS
New York City



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OUR NEXT PEARL HARBOR?

by FRANCIS and KATHARINE DRAKE

What are our defenses against atomic bombing? Against guided missiles? The answer is not comforting to contemplate. FRANCIS and KATHARINE DRAKE, born and educated in England, are now both American citizens. Mr. Drake served in the Royal Flying Corps from 1914 through 1919. Still an active pilot, he has flown the length of Europe and South America and knows the Pacific both from carriers and planes. In the crisis leading up to Pearl Harbor he wrote with his wife a series of prophetic articles on our aerial unpreparedness which attracted wide attention when they were published in the *Atlantic*. — THE EDITOR

THE military security of the American homeland vanished with the explosion of the first atomic bomb. In the past two years we have been made aware that the United States can now be attacked directly and decisively without the cumbersome massing of enemy surface forces. The protection of our oceans has gone and the industrial potential which triumphed over two world wars has been transformed into the most strategic and vulnerable target in the world. Our land lies naked before a weapon which, in the words of the Smyth Report, "is potentially destructive beyond the wildest nightmares of the imagination; a weapon so ideally suited to sudden, unannounced attack that a country's major cities might be destroyed overnight by an ostensibly friendly power."

Were the United Nations' plan for Atomic Control and effective policing already in being, or in reasonable prospect, our new-found vulnerability might not cause such great anxiety. There would be less need to think in terms of national defense. But the plan has not come into effect. In spite of the unanimous effort of the free nations of the world, it has been consistently blocked by the Soviet Union, and today solid hope for collective outlawing of atomic warfare is still remote. Deprived of

international protection in a world seething with unrest, vulnerable to new atomic developments so frightful that they dwarf even the Hiroshima nightmare, surely the first instincts of self-preservation should turn our thoughts urgently to our own defenses?

It is not the purpose of this article to argue the probability of war with Soviet Russia. But it is scarcely deniable that the *possibility* exists, and in the new and appalling connotations of atomic warfare even the possibility of attack is so terrifying that anything short of the utmost precaution is criminal folly. Yet it is a fact that today the United States is virtually helpless against such an attack and that we have been sliding at increasing speed towards a military impotence that is an open invitation to disaster.

The prospect of rearming the United States is distressing to any civilized person. Is there then no chance of bringing about some modification of the Russian stand? Cannot the United Nations' plan be amended to suit the Russian view and still remain effective? The record of the past two years provides an unsatisfactory answer. Every effort of which men of good will are capable has been made and made repeatedly, including the offer of the

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United States to surrender its atom bombs, its secrets and factories to United Nations control. Every proposal has been rejected. The situation was summed up on August 3, 1947, by the United States deputy representative on the United Nations Atomic Commission, Frederick Osborn: "Mr. Gromyko has made it clear that every aspect of the Commission's report was unacceptable to the Soviet Union. He again offered the Russian proposal: The United States should destroy its bombs and bomb assembly plants and make public all its information on a 'gentleman's agreement' that no one would engage in an atomic war. Thereafter all nations could start on an even basis to discuss a treaty or convention which would define a way in which the gentleman's agreement could be made effective and binding."

When this offer of a "gentleman's agreement" is appraised against the Soviet Union's post-war record, against its repeated breaches of good faith, its repudiation of the Potsdam Agreement, its torpedoing of the Moscow Conference, its persistent misuse of the veto to emasculate the United Nations, its boycott of the Marshall Plan, its own massive development of atomic weapons, there is offered not even a plausible imitation of security. All that emerges, in the words of Mr. Osborn, is "a fraud on the peoples of the world."

This consistent obstruction of the United Nations' peace aims might not be so alarming were it not accompanied by the increasingly militaristic attitude of the Soviet government. While the United States has set the pace in rapid demobilization, Russia is still maintaining by far the largest Army and Air Force in the world, and is expanding the latter at unprecedented speed. It is the belief of Major General Oliver P. Echols, USAAF Chief of Supply during the war, that she is producing as many as 44,000 military planes this year compared to our 1330. She has awarded top priority and unlimited resources to the development of atomic weapons and proclaims that they will shortly rival our own, a view shared by most of our own atomic experts.

Since the end of the war, Russia has forced behind the Iron Curtain eleven countries with a total population of 120 million people and she is actively working in Europe, India, and China to expand this rule. She has isolated her people from all outside contact and is fomenting among them ill feeling against this country by constant warning that America is planning to attack them. All our efforts to aid the suffering people of Europe have been twisted and misrepresented. None of this is necessarily a prelude to war, but it is foolish to close one's

eyes to the fact that Russia is a formidable military power and that her attitude toward us is increasingly unfriendly. What is her great Army to do? What is her great Air Force to carry? Is it possible that the Soviet dictators, ruling a land three times the size of our own, honestly believe that they may be "encircled"? Is it possible that they are considering a future blow against this country, the great obstacle to world Communism? We do not know. We can only admit that it is a possibility.

2

If the United States were to be threatened with atomic attack either today or at any time within the next two years, this sorry fact must come to light — that our position is relatively more defenseless than it was at the time of Pearl Harbor. Then, at least, we were able to fall back on wide margins of time and the certainty of uninterrupted war production. In atomic warfare we know beyond doubt that our time must be reckoned in hours or even in minutes. Army, Navy, Air Forces, and scientists are agreed on one point: if a modern high-speed bombing attack once gets under way there is no local defense against it. They are equally agreed that short of effective international control, the only defense lies in the ability to mount a counterattack so swiftly and on so great a scale that any aggressor must know beforehand that instant reprisal will smash his own country level with the ground — in short, to offer him a certainty of national suicide. General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General of our Air Forces, has summarized the essence of American security in these words: "We have one real defense: a planned and ready offensive. If another bully nation arises, the only way to avoid such an atomic war is to be able to win it instantly and decisively. Such readiness would make any dictator think twice." (This counter-attack principle was wholly effective in the last war in connection with poison gas.)

The power to implement such counterattack at present resides in the long-range bomber — the backbone of air power. It is this power that we have thrown away during the past few years. True, we still have the Bomb; but we no longer have the means of delivering decisive numbers to a distant enemy. Two years ago we had world supremacy in the air. Today, to the shame of Government, of Congress, of our own unminding selves, this supremacy for which 74,000 American airmen laid down their lives, and for which we paid 80 billion dollars, has been reduced to a mere shell, pulled

down from 2,400,000 men to 300,000 men, from 80,000 planes to 1720 (combat types) now in commission. Here are the figures of our decline in power of reprisal: —

Long-range bombers (B-29s) in Air Forces on V-J Day	2865
B-29s in full combat readiness on August 1, 1947	144

Of the 144, few are actually in combat readiness. The Air Forces recently scraped together what they admitted to be "every operational B-29 in the country," and offered a demonstration of their offensive strength over the Eastern seaboard. Of the 130 planes tapped, 28 failed to reach the rendezvous. The remainder, designated by their commander, General George Kenney, as "a futile force," carried through a program which caustic onlookers dismissed as "Operation FLOP." After weeks of preparation, Operation FLOP! How must it have gone if, instead of demonstration, the occasion had indeed been that "sudden, unannounced attack"?

What then have we done with our matchless air strength, with our 2865 B-29s? We have put them in dead storage, 2507 of them. To get them into combat readiness would require this: *first*, from three to six months to get the planes ready to fly, *if* we had the ground crews; *second*, twelve months to train the air crews, *if* we had the air crews; *third*, another six months to weld the Groups into an adequate force to counterattack, *if* the Air Forces had the authority and the money. Three months or two years, it must be all the same in the next war when every hour may be spelling death for millions.

Furthermore, the B-29, originated in the thirties and first built in 1941, is obsolescent. Its radius, 1500 miles with full bombload, is insufficient to enable it to reach far-distant targets without dependence on refueling bases. An aggressor could hardly fail to blow up such bases on his way in to attack. New-type planes, such as the B-36, have a range of over 10,000 miles with a 5-ton bombload and can strike back at any target in the world without refueling. Prototypes are in the air already, but instead of the solid numbers that might prohibit aggression, we have less than 100 on order over a two-year period. Even were we to begin today, not all the gold in Fort Knox, nor all the emergency legislation in Congress, could assemble a decisive force of new-type bombers with trained crews before the winter of 1949, and to begin today would involve summoning a special session of Congress. Our capacity for rapid building has become so enfeebled that military plane production, which once hit 96,000 a year, has sunk to 1330 (of all types) this year. Two

thirds of our manufacturers are going broke, their staffs have been dispersed, and their research has almost reached a standstill. In spite of all this, however, our B-29s could still tide us over as a protective stopgap were they brought out of storage and adequately manned, and they could be of priceless value in training the air and ground crews for oncoming new types.

3

THE research and development of new planes, of radio-controlled planes, and of guided missiles is another aspect of national security that has recently suffered dangerous crippling. The guided missile, when its range has been extended, will make obsolete every existing form of bomb delivery. These hurtling missiles travel hundreds of miles high and plunge to earth at nearly 5000 m.p.h. In the embryonic form of the V-2, they went to work on Britain in the last war. Not a single one was ever seen by the defenses, let alone intercepted. Had they been fitted with atomic warheads, England would have been out of the war in a few days.

General Ira C. Eaker, when Deputy Commander of Army Air Forces, stated that guided missiles with 5000-mile range might be developed in five years, were the program handled on the scale of the Manhattan Project, and that they could probably be developed in fifteen years at the normal peacetime pace. It is clear that the country which comes in second in this race will be at the mercy of the winner, for no means of defense is possible.

What are we doing to maintain our all-important leadership in this field? Our program, the main part of which was entrusted to the Air Forces, has met this fate: the Air Forces required \$300,000,000 for the program; they received only \$33,000,000, made up of \$20,000,000 for research and \$13,000,000 for procurement. Research leaders and officers are doing their utmost in spite of meager funds and rising costs, and valuable progress is doubtless being made, but the main program is hamstrung. And how do we stand on atomic development? The chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission tells us: "Since Hiroshima the United States has lost momentum in atomic energy development. For from the level of V-J Day we have actually gone downhill, measured in such vital factors as scientific personnel, depreciation of plants, intensity of effort, and in other important ways."

A Ready Force of 144 bombers and a woefully underfinanced Air Forces' research program — such is the travesty of first-line striking power that stands

today between us and that "sudden, unannounced attack." The hierarchy devoted to traditional weapons is constantly advising "a balanced defense." How balanced is it to have an 11½-billion-dollar program of men, ships, tanks, guns, small planes, and only 144 obsolescent bombers capable of action, not one of them able to carry an atom bomb directly to a distant enemy? Whatever may have been the usefulness of battlewagons and carriers in the past, whatever part they may still play in the future, is it realistic to place nearly a 5-billion-dollar emphasis on ships, steaming 25 m.p.h., when enemy bombers can advance at 400 m.p.h. to slaughter millions in our homeland? Does it make sense to have authorized or committed 20 billions in foreign aid, to be contemplating some 5 billions a year more under the Marshall Plan, and to have no security at home? This aid is essential, of course, but money regardless, Greeks, Turks, and others would surely be out of their minds to defy the Soviet Union in favor of a distant ally with only 144 bombers which could not even muster effectively over Manhattan.

This is what our defense expenditure should give us if we are to have striking power capable of safeguarding the nation to the best extent possible, pending the hoped-for advent of an international police force.

First, it should give us a modern Air Striking Force with a minimum of 1000 new-type, long-range bombers, complete with crews, maintained in combat readiness at all times, capable of striking anywhere in the world from the United States, with an adequate Active Reserve; a long-range Escort Force; and a procurement program capable of replacing 20 per cent of all these planes every year.

Second, it should give us an adequately financed research program, to keep us in the forefront of world developments in air power and guided missiles.

We should be assured that many hundreds of these planes were being maintained in instant readiness, day and night, widely dispersed to prevent destruction by bombs or saboteurs, each plane parked above the concrete shaft containing its atom bomb. It should be possible for the President to pick up a telephone at any hour of the day or night and satisfy himself, the nation, and, most of all, the world, that these Ready Groups could be off and on their way immediately on receipt of orders. There will be no time for rehearsals or mistakes or for mustering of resources in the next war.

It can be argued that this is an offensive force, likely to alarm other nations; but in vertical war-

fare the only defense is the power to strike offensively, the maintenance of a striking force so large, so well dispersed, and so everlastingly ready that a potential aggressor can never hope for another Pearl Harbor or count on anything to save him from devastation as terrible as that which he contemplates inflicting on others. There would be no need for such national striking power were we not confronted by a strong, unfriendly nation, a larger Air Force, and a deadlock in the United Nations.

Pending the emergence of an international police force for the prevention of war, there are two choices that confront our nation today. First, we can achieve a reasonable degree of interim security by building a protective machine strong enough to discourage any possible aggressor. Second, we can remain defenseless and take the chance that international control may somehow come into being ahead of any threat of war.

It is a grave decision for a nation just recovering from the strain of a long, unsought war, for a people to whom the thought of war has always been anathema. Before we come to one decision or the other, let us try to evaluate, with the help of our leading atomic scientists, what we would have to accept should war descend on us again as swiftly and unexpectedly as it did the last time. What would it be like?

4

MANY of us may still be thinking of atomic attack in terms of Hiroshima, of a colossal explosion and a deathroll of 100,000 people. While vigorous "security" prevents any specific disclosure by scientists of the atomic developments of the past two years, we can be certain that the effect of the next atom bomb, if one is ever dropped, will bear about as much resemblance to the Hiroshima bomb as a British blockbuster bore to a hand grenade. Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, in charge of manufacturing the first atom bomb, estimates that were the United States to be attacked at some future time, "atomic weapons might kill 40,000,000 Americans in a single night." Airmen and scientists already refer to the Hiroshima-Nagasaki missiles as "old-type bombs," and the Atomic Scientists of Chicago describe them as "the first relatively primitive atomic bombs." Professor William A. Higinbotham, of the Manhattan Project, stated that the first bomb contained only "a few pounds of atomic explosive." According to a statement distributed by the National Committee on Atomic Information, "every effort was made to keep the first explosions to a minimum. The real thing in atomic bombs has not been tried

out yet." As far back as January, 1946, Dr. Harold C. Urey pointedly quoted the British scientist, Dr. M. L. Oliphant (presumably not subject to such rigid security), who predicted "bombs in the near future of from 50 to 100 times the power of those which have been exploded."

Finally, in February, 1947, one of Dr. Urey's Manhattan Project associates, Professor Edward Teller, made one of the most significant statements of our time: "We must be prepared for startling developments. It has been repeatedly stated that future bombs may easily surpass those used in the last war by a factor of a thousand. I share this belief. One consequence of such bigger bombs would be that instead of three or four square miles, *three or four hundred square miles* might be devastated at a single blow." (Italics supplied.)

Since no city in the United States is larger than 400 square miles, and few are as large, this means that any of our great centers, with their millions of inhabitants, might be blotted out by a single bomb in a fraction of a second. No would-be aggressor could fail to note that half our population and almost all our heavy industry are compressed into one area known to our own airmen as the Central Target Zone. This zone is the most strategic target in the world, and one of the most accessible, for it is close to our frontiers and can be criss-crossed by high-speed bombers within a single hour. Containing some 70 million people and the bulk of our productive economy, it is bounded by Milwaukee and Kansas City in the West, by Boston and Washington in the East, and includes the following key cities: —

Chicago	Cleveland	Boston
Milwaukee	Buffalo	New York
Kansas City	Pittsburgh	Philadelphia
St. Louis	Cincinnati	Wilmington
Detroit	Louisville	Baltimore
Columbus	Indianapolis	Washington

Given 18 of the new super-bombs visualized by Professor Teller, all of these cities and most of the 30 million people living in them could be wiped out by a single wave of bombers. With the blast factor of Hiroshima stepped up 1000 times, people and buildings alike would literally disintegrate.

The picture of such slaughter is monstrous beyond our imagination. But even this horror pales beside the picture of what could happen to people living *outside* the cities. It is Professor Teller's belief that "such bigger bombs may prove to be even more dangerous in an indirect way . . . there is a threshold beyond which radioactivity has lethal effects. . . . Sufficiently strong radioactivity will kill all living tissue." Most of us are familiar with

the elaborate precautions taken by hospitals to guard against rays from a tiny speck of radium — the lead gloves, the lead aprons, the thick shields. It is used in infinitesimal fractions of a gram. An explosion of 18 super-bombs — or perhaps of 100 medium bombs — over the cities would release the equivalent of 4 million *tons* of unshielded radium and spread it throughout the Central Target Zone.

To the 40 million people living in the smaller cities, towns, and farms of the Zone, a vast mass of radioactive air could spell death in a particularly revolting form, and it would be inescapable. Wherever human beings seek shelter, they must always *breathe*. If intensely radioactive air is breathed into the lungs, it passes into the blood, destroys the bone marrow, and sets up leukemia, an uncontrollable blood cancer for which there is no cure. We have learned from official reports on the Japanese bombings that, aside from blast, radioactivity from an atom bomb can defoliate the crops, sicken the beasts, poison the water, and cause human beings to bleed slowly and dreadfully to death. By comparison, instant death from blast would undoubtedly be the more merciful.

Many may be tempted to seek reassurance from the very hideousness of the prospect. "It is *too* awful," some of us may try to convince ourselves, "no nation would ever be so fiendish as to inflict that agony on helpless civilians, on women and children who have no possible escape." Let us not forget, then, that *it is only what we ourselves have already done to others*, on a smaller scale. Let us not forget that there has never been a weapon invented in human history, from arrows to flame throwers, that has not been used to the utmost of its capacity. If we, a tolerant and enlightened nation, could bring ourselves to drop atom bombs on the homeland of an enemy, are we prepared, in the absence of an effective international police force, to rely solely on moral force to prevent an enemy from dropping bombs on us? It is the responsibility of every individual to weigh this question for himself, for should another war crisis develop, with all the lightning speed made possible by planes and bombs, every American home and family is going to be at stake during every second of every day and night, until the crisis resolves one way or another.

5

AFTER a great war it is natural to object to formidable defense programs on the ground that they promote only armament races and still more wars. But a nation must have security from some source.

We have tried by every means open to us to help bring into being an international agency able to provide this security, not only for ourselves, but for all nations, and it is certain that we shall never cease to work towards that goal. The titanic power for evil of the atom can never be successfully controlled by individual nations. There can never be hope for enduring peace until *all* the nations combine to make a single world. But with the world as unsettled as it is today, can we, the leading democracy, afford to sit with folded hands while a fully armed dictatorship expands its military strength before our eyes? Within this decade such a policy all but cost Great Britain her life. It has cost us 300 billion dollars, with uncounted billions still to come.

It is a fallacy to claim that military preparedness has ever led the United States into war. The reverse has been true. Twice in our generation we have remained unarmed in the shadow of military might, have thought it in our power to remain at peace. Twice we have been attacked. How large appeared the cost of preparedness before those wars — of the preparedness that we rejected — how small it seems today compared with the enormous expenditures that might have been averted! If we deny the possibility of war under the present world conditions, why have a defense at all? If we admit it, as our 11½-billion-dollar defense budget would seem to indicate, why does our program not provide any realistic means of discouraging atomic attack?

Our monopoly of atomic weapons cannot possibly last much longer, if indeed it still exists. On this point all our scientists are agreed. In 1940 Russian scientists split the uranium atom. In 1942 Dnieperpetrovsk engineers were already experimenting with a process similar to the one used in our Oak Ridge, Tennessee, plant. In 1945 Russian work was further expedited by valuable information from German sources, from the Smyth Report, and from the Soviet espionage ring in Canada. Nobel Prize winner Dr. Irving Langmuir stated in 1946: "I

believe that the Russians will have begun to produce bombs within about three years. Thereafter, however, there is a definite possibility that Russia may accumulate atomic bombs far faster than we do." If this estimate proves to be true, it barely gives us time to re-create an adequate Air Force ahead of a Russian stockpile of atomic bombs.

There are times when men and women must unite in action for their own salvation. We believe that this is one of them. We believe that the time has come for an aroused public opinion to demand adequate national protection pending the achievement of some system of collective security — whether through the United Nations, through a Federal Union of the Western Powers or of the Western Hemisphere; and further, to demand of Congress that this protection be adequate *in fact*, not merely in billions to maintain outdated equipment.

It is a bleak fact that no such adequate protection can be achieved until deep into 1950 unless it can be made the subject of quick action by a Special Session of Congress. But it is an even bleaker fact that there are few indications that inertia in Washington will give way to realistic action without pressure from the countless individuals who must be the targets in tomorrow's war. Is it not time for every Congressman to be asked whether he is satisfied, in view of present world unrest, that the United States will not be attacked for several years. And, if he concedes the possibility, is he satisfied with a first-line defense of 144 obsolescent bombers, and only 100 new ones on order?

There are no insurmountable obstacles between us and security. We have the best scientists, the best airmen, designers, facilities, materials, and the most money of any nation in the world. There is no insurance we can buy which would be cheaper, or as cheap. We owe it not only to ourselves but to all humanity, for if we go down before international protection can become a dependable, working reality, the world of free men will go down with us.



United Nations

If the United Nations is not strengthened in time to avert war, a long night of brutality will descend upon the survivors on this planet. CORD MEYER, JR., the President of United World Federalists and a former Marine, tells us specifically how the Charter can be amended and the UN strengthened by giving it the legal authority and material power to prevent war and competitive arming. The article which follows is one of the climactic chapters in Mr. Meyer's forthcoming book, Peace or Anarchy? which will be published in November.

PEACE IS STILL POSSIBLE

by CORD MEYER, JR.

1

Now that the United Nations has been in operation for some time, the optimism which it originally inspired has been dispelled by events as unhappy as they were predictable. The United States and Russia have displayed their lack of confidence in the organization by engaging in preparations for a war which they evidently believe the UN is incapable of preventing. The meetings of the Security Council have been used as a sounding board for the dissemination of propaganda or as the means of mustering a majority bloc of votes to defeat proposals without regard to the merits of the case. Far from seeking agreement within the organization, the diplomatic representatives of the member nations appear more interested in employing it to prove the malevolence of each other's intentions. As crisis succeeds crisis, there is a growing danger that faith will be lost not only in the UN as it now stands but also in the possibility of any successful international order.

The UN's limitations are evident in the rules governing the operation of the Security Council, which bears the whole responsibility for detecting threats to the peace and for punishing aggression. Under the unanimity rule, the permanent members, the Big Five, reserve the right to veto any attempt by the Council to determine whether an act of aggression has actually occurred, what nation is the aggressor, and whether collective economic or military sanctions should be employed.

Under what conditions is it conceivable that enforcement action could be taken by the UN against an aggressor? It would be possible only in the event that the parties to the dispute were small nations without the support of any of the five permanent members. When it is understood that all decisions to apply economic or military sanctions are subject to the great-power veto, the

provisions for enforcement action appear to be an elaborate fraud, rather than evidence of the Charter's strength.

Even if a case can be imagined where the UN was permitted by all the permanent members to enforce a settlement on a small country, such action would hardly demonstrate the organization's ability to preserve world peace. Border disputes between Peru and Ecuador are not the occasion for major wars. The ponderous enforcement machinery of the Charter can operate only in the one situation where there is no real danger of world conflict. The air forces and armies that the members have agreed to make available can be flung only against the weakest and most remote states. It is as if a special police force had been organized with much publicity to fight a crime wave and had then been ordered to restrict itself to preventing fist fights between ten-year-old children, while murder, arson, and rape flourished.

The Charter creates a double standard of international morality. The weak country without an ally among the permanent members is to be swiftly punished for its transgressions. The strong are to enjoy unfettered license. Despite its solemn expressions of high purpose, the Charter actually confirms the anarchic right of the powerful states to rule by force. In pretentious legal terminology, it formally ratifies the law of the jungle that the strong shall take what they can and the weak grant what they must.

These consequences of the unanimity rule have been revealed in a long series of bitter disputes, in which the permanent members have used the veto or the threat of a veto to obstruct and prevent decision whenever it was to their advantage to do so. As a result, a widespread demand has arisen for an elimination of the veto power. This raises the

whole question of the efficiency of the collective security system as a means of preventing war.

Let us suppose that the Charter is modified by abolishing the veto. The Security Council would then be theoretically capable of employing military measures against a great power that had committed aggression. The result, however, would be a world war. The only way in which aggression can be dealt with under the collective security system is by a war waged by other nations against the aggressor. The system rests on the joint action of heavily armed national governments each of which retains, through its own military establishment, the means of resisting any coercion with major warfare.

Every nation would be forced to continue adding to its armed strength, even if the veto were removed. If one state remained heavily armed, while the others disarmed in their reliance on collective action for protection, the strong nation could not be checked if it attacked. So, in fear that one government might establish sufficient force to challenge successfully the collective power of the rest, all the members of the system would have no choice but to build up their respective armies, and the arms race would continue.

The present division of the world into two opposing blocs destroys whatever significance a majority vote in the Security Council might have. Just as the successful practice of the balance-of-power theory depended on the existence of many states of comparatively equal strength, so collective security presumes for its operation that there is no one nation capable of opposing the joint forces of the others. Now that only the United States and Russia appear to have a chance of victory in another war, neither of them could be persuaded that it was protected against the possibility of attack by the other merely because the Council could vote for military measures against the aggressor. They are both so powerful that the support of such lesser nations as are not already their satellites would offer little additional protection. A mere change in the voting rules of the Council could not remove their mutual fears or check their rivalry.

Atomic and biological weapons have made nonsense of any agreement by separate armed states to act together to protect a nation that has been attacked. Since a country may lose a large part of its industry and urban population in the first moments of attack, the Council would be faced with a completed conquest by the time it had met to consider the case. A system that cannot prevent the use of modern weapons, but can only deal with aggression after it occurs, promises as little protection as would a fire department that could not be

called until after one's house had burned down. The defenders of the veto are correct when they point out that any failure of the militarily powerful to coöperate voluntarily means world war.

However, when the unanimity rule was inserted in the Charter, the defects of the collective security system were not remedied. Rather the experiment begun with the League of Nations was abandoned and a return was made to total anarchy. The great-power veto may have been a master stroke of political realism in one sense, but it was unbelievably naïve in another. For collective security, the framers of the Charter substituted the veto and the hope of voluntary coöperation between armed and sovereign states. One unworkable system was replaced by another which is, if anything, even more impractical.

Those who believe in the possibility of friendly coöperation between independent nations forget that each must strive for military supremacy to assure its own safety. Do we not see the result in the desperate struggle for arms and bases in which the United States and Russia are already engaged?

2

THE discovery and use of the atomic bomb emphasized the structural weakness of the UN. The pretense of coöperative unanimity between nations competing in the production of such weapons was a farce that could not be maintained for long; and yet to give the bomb to a United Nations that was obviously incapable of controlling it would merely hasten the development of atomic explosives by potentially hostile governments. To meet this dilemma, our government, after ten critical months of delay, finally proposed what has become known as the Baruch Plan. It is widely believed that in offering this scheme we have done all within our power to end the arms race. Whether this is true or not can only be shown by a critical analysis of the Plan.

To summarize, the Plan calls for an abolition of atomic weapons. We have agreed to discontinue the manufacture of bombs and to dispose of existing bombs, on condition that all nations accept international inspection and agree to control, by an international authority, of the potentially dangerous peacetime uses of atomic energy. With these control measures in effect, it would be impossible for any nation to construct bombs secretly. Only by expropriating the atomic power plants of the authority and openly defying the international inspectors would a government be able to manu-

facture atomic explosives. With the Plan in operation, the danger of a surprise atomic attack would be removed. Any interference with the inspectors would be immediately evident to the world, and other nations acting through the Security Council are then to join forces against the violator. No government that seizes the atomic plants of the international authority is to retain the right to veto collective enforcement action.

Since the Plan contemplates only the elimination of atomic bombs from national arsenals, the separate nations would be free to compete for every other weapon of modern warfare. If the United States or the Soviet Union armed with conventional weapons chose to defy the inspectors, the result would be World War III. No majority vote in the Security Council could disguise that reality or provide protection. The seizure of the internationally operated atomic power plants, which could be converted to bomb production within a few months, would be such a clear indication of intent to commit aggression that it would only be attempted in coördination with a general assault launched with rockets, blockbusters, bacteria, and mechanized armies. Mr. Baruch was correct in insisting that the United States should give up its bombs only in return for a system that promised "swift and certain punishment" for violators, but he underestimated the price of such a system. Changes more fundamental than a juggling of voting rules in the Security Council are necessary.

Since, veto or no veto, war would result from the first interference with the inspection system, the Plan calls for a strategic balance of atomic plants among the nations in order to equalize their bomb-making capacity. The number and size of atomic plants for the peaceful production of electric power that the authority maintains in each country will be an essential factor in its national security. If one nation seizes the plants within its territory, the others will be forced to seize theirs, and the side that has the largest atomic industry will enjoy a considerable advantage in the resulting war. In view of this fact, how can the nations possibly reach the agreement on plant distribution, which must precede acceptance of the Plan?

If the Soviet government believed, as it has some reason to believe, that the United States and the British Commonwealth would be allied against it in any future war, it could hardly agree to an equal division of atomic power facilities among the three. Nor can one imagine either the United States or Great Britain consenting to an allocation of plants which would give the Soviet Union as large an atomic industry as they owned together. One

cannot slice a pie into three pieces so that each piece will be bigger than either of the other two.

3

THE difficulty of agreeing on a particular distribution of atomic industry is further complicated by the impossibility of equalizing all the factors that condition the speed with which the various nations can convert to bomb production. The high level of industrialization, the technological skill, and the special experience of the United States with atomic energy combine to give this country a distinct advantage in any sudden attempt to construct bombs. The Soviet leaders might well hesitate to agree to a plan which, upon the first violation, would commit them to an atomic armament race which they would have little hope of winning against the technological superiority of the United States.

If accepted, the Baruch Plan would not remove the fear of aggression. It would merely prevent atomic bombs from being used in the first months of the war. Military power would have to remain the first and overriding objective of every government, and so long as this is true it is difficult to believe that so important an element of armed strength as atomic industry could be distributed according to any prearranged scheme. The Soviet government can reasonably refuse either to permit inspection or to discontinue its efforts to produce its own bombs so long as there is no assurance that the United States has ceased to build the long-range rockets and biological weapons with which the urban population of Russia can be annihilated. The United States Senate might well be justified in refusing to destroy our atomic bombs except in conjunction with the demobilization of the Red Army and in return for material evidence that Russia was not preparing for other types of specialized warfare.

Atomic bombs cannot be successfully prohibited while aggression in all its other forms remains possible. Security is indivisible and cannot be realized by attempting to ban one particular weapon. Another war cannot be prevented or even delayed by futile attempts to draft a set of Marquis of Queensberry rules that will be ignored the moment the conflict occurs. Unless the nations are willing to join in erecting reliable safeguards against war itself and all attempts to prepare for it, the rivalry for atomic bombs and for every other element of military power will continue to its disastrous conclusion.

We are led inescapably to the conclusion that changes in the UN more fundamental than the Baruch proposals must be advanced by our government if we are to have any chance of avoiding the approaching conflict. These necessary changes are logical developments of the existing structure. They can be accomplished by basic amendment of the Charter. The objective is a UN that has sufficient legal authority and material power to prevent the ownership or use by any nation of the means of organized warfare. It must be capable of apprehending potential aggressors before they have acquired enough armed strength to be dangerous. National preparation for war must be made not only unnecessary but impossible. Until these minimum requirements are fulfilled by workable world institutions, peace between the nations can be no more than the temporary and suspicious truce that it now is.

4

In defining this structure of security, two ideas are indispensable. The first is the concept of an enforceable law that binds individuals. The incredible destructiveness of modern weapons makes it essential that security rest on a legal system of effective prevention and individual penalization rather than on collective measures that are merely another name for war. The UN must be given the constitutional authority to maintain the peace through laws that call for obedience from the individual inhabitants of the world as their first duty and which no national government may override. By thus establishing individual responsibility, it will become possible for the first time to arrest and try the instigators of aggression as criminals *before* they have had the opportunity to plunge their country into war.

National governments will never submit themselves and their citizens to the rule of law unless there is a federal division of authority. Only those functions of government that are determined to be indispensable to the prevention of war need be transferred to the UN, while the member states retain their independence of action in all other matters. Those who oppose the strengthening of the UN by raising fears of a tyrannical superstate grossly exaggerate the kind of change that is being proposed. No responsible advocate of world law has ever suggested that the national governments should be made subordinate to an all-powerful central government.

Since there must be a federal division of authority, the problem is to determine how the line can be

drawn so that national governments are asked to give up no more of their independence than is absolutely essential to the preservation of peace. The first clear necessity is the limitation of armed forces. National governments can be allowed to retain only the weapons needed for the maintenance of domestic order. The revised Charter will have to list those arms which it will be a punishable crime for any national official or citizen to plan, produce, or possess. It is essential that all the major weapons be prohibited, not just atomic bombs. These would include biological and chemical weapons, tanks, warships, and the like; in fact, the whole range of heavy armament designed for the mass slaughter of international war. Similarly, a limit must be set on the number of troops that any government can be allowed to retain. So long as the nations possess any of the means of indiscriminate destruction, they are a continuous threat to each other and have the strength to oppose with large-scale war any attempt by the UN to enforce its regulations.

In order to ensure obedience to the rules regulating national armament, the UN must have the right to maintain an international inspection system with free access into all nations. Recruited from the able scientists and technicians of every country, these international inspectors must conduct a continuous world-wide search for all attempts to produce illegal armament. Through aerial and ground surveys and through inspection of mines and industries, efforts to prepare for aggression can be detected before a dangerous number of the prohibited weapons have been secretly amassed. The technical problems involved in this inspection are great but they are not insoluble, provided that the inspectors enjoy freedom of movement.

As the Lilienthal Report indicated, inspection alone is not sufficient protection in the atomic energy industry. An international authority established under the revised Charter must manage and control those aspects of the peaceful development of atomic energy that can be diverted with dangerous ease to the secret production of bombs. Similar measures of positive international control may perhaps prove to be necessary in other fields.

In addition to the constitutional authority to prohibit certain weapons, to limit the size of national armed forces, and to establish preventive measures of inspection and control, the UN must have the right to prohibit all use of force in the settlement of international disputes. Once the responsibility for defending nations from attack has been shifted from the many national governments to the UN, all attempts by a nation to organize for war can be clearly identified as aggressive in purpose. If the

principle that aggression is a crime, under which the Nazi leaders were sentenced at Nuremberg, is to have any meaning in the future, it must find expression in specific and enforceable legislation binding on the citizens of all nations. Until national governments are no longer dependent on their separate armies for defense against each other, outlawry of aggression will be a futile gesture, because defensive and aggressive preparations are indistinguishable up to the moment when an attack is launched.

5

THE UN must be given not only the right to prohibit war and to prevent preparations for war but the armed power to enforce that authority. A revised Charter must empower the UN to raise, train, and support under its own command individuals owing exclusive allegiance to it and sufficiently heavily armed to ensure prompt execution of the world laws. It is not enough that governments should agree to hold available contingents of their national armies for use by the UN. The world police must be responsible to the UN alone and must be entirely distinct from such forces as the national governments are allowed to retain for the maintenance of order among their own citizens. This central security force must be strong enough to be dependable, but safeguards against its misuse must also be found.

The nature of its armament would be determined by the two distinct functions it should be prepared to perform. Its usual task would be comparable to that of the FBI in the United States. Working in conjunction with the international inspectors and the world courts, it would have the responsibility of arresting such individuals or small criminal groups as might attempt to evade the laws regulating the manufacture of weapons and the production of atomic energy. In the performance of this duty, the members of the UN police would have the support of all national governments and would need only small arms for their own protection.

They would also have to be prepared to deal with revolt by an entire nation against the UN. For this purpose, the UN police must have those modern weapons which the national governments would be prohibited from owning. The very fact that the UN would have a monopoly on this heavy armament would reduce to the vanishing point attempts at national revolt. They could be quickly suppressed before the nationalists had the opportunity to produce a significant amount of war machinery.

Whether atomic bombs should be included among

the weapons at the disposal of the world police is a debatable question. It can be argued that the atomic bomb is so inhuman a device, and the slaughter it causes so indiscriminate, that all those in existence should be destroyed and none ever again constructed. On the other hand, the temptation to evade the inspection system might be increased if the UN police force did not have its own supply of atomic bombs. A very few clandestinely produced bombs in the hands of hysterical nationalists would constitute a real challenge to the power of the police. But if the police itself had bombs in addition to its other armament, successful revolt would be out of the question.

The distribution of the UN police contingents in various strategic areas throughout the world is necessary both to ensure swift action and as a safeguard against a *coup d'état*. The concentration of the entire armament of the UN in one locality would create the danger of its seizure by conspirators. If a network of UN bases were established, each manned by an armed unit of the police, the seizure of any one base could be met by the joint action of the rest, and the chances of conspiracy by personnel of the police would be greatly reduced.

The arms of this world guard could be supplied originally from those weapons now in the possession of national governments. Since the police would not have to compete with armed opponents, it could afford to destroy most of this armament, maintaining only enough to guarantee its superiority over the disarmed national governments.

Finally, there is the problem of nationalistic loyalties and prejudices. A limit must be set on the number of volunteers that can enlist from each nation, and a similar quota should be observed in the selection of commanding officers. In the unlikely event of national revolt, there would still be the possibility that those members of the police who were citizens of the rebellious state might refuse to act against their countrymen or might even take up arms in their defense.

To meet this danger, only the smallest units — platoons or companies — should be permitted to contain men of a single nationality, so that no concerted action by large numbers belonging to one country would be possible. Good pay, high standards of enlistment, and a sense of the transcendent importance of their responsibility would help to attract the kind of men required. Many veterans of the last war who could be persuaded only with the greatest difficulty to fight in another nationalistic conflict can be counted on to volunteer for service in an international force whose duty will not be

to fight wars but to prevent them from occurring.

Full national disarmament and the creation of a preponderantly powerful UN guard are the two fundamental and indispensable requisites of a workable system of security. Disarmament of the nations will never become a fact unless it is accompanied by the armament of the UN, so that there may be the certainty of swift and sure punishment for any who attempt aggression.

6

A STRONG UN must have an assured and adequate source of funds. Yet to allow it the broad authority to levy taxes that is possessed, for example, by the Federal government of the United States would give it the power to change the internal social and economic structure of every nation. A state cannot control the nature of its economy unless it controls the distribution of taxation. To demand that the national governments give up this right would surely prevent their entrance into the security system. A compromise is necessary, and several have been proposed. One suggestion has been that the UN be allowed to tax only international trade. It has also been pointed out that through its control of atomic energy a strengthened UN would be able eventually to support itself by sale of atomically generated power to governments and private companies.

In comparison with the astronomical sums that nations now expend in futile efforts to surpass each other in the armament competition, the amount each would have to contribute to maintain an effective UN would be insignificant. The fear of atomic destruction is not the only universal sentiment that can unite all states under a world law. Common to all nations is the desire to throw off the growing burden of armaments and to turn their factories and skills to the production of the means of sustaining life rather than of destroying it.

The amended Charter should deny the right to secede. If it is to guarantee protection, the UN cannot allow its members the right to withdraw when they see fit. A nation must not be able to free itself from international supervision, forcing a renewal of the arms race and certain war. In view of the nature of the new weapons, secession would be synonymous with aggression.

Finally, the Charter must reserve to the member nations all powers not specifically transferred to the UN. In agreeing to this amended Charter, national governments would be giving up only the right and means of annihilating each other. Each

nation would remain free to practice whatever form of economy its people desired.

The fear that a broad interpretation of the new Charter might enable the UN to overstep its authority can be greatly reduced if the basic world law is written in detail into the original amendments. The more specific the Charter is in its definition of the security code regulating disarmament and prohibiting inter-nation war, the less each government will fear being outvoted and coerced on matters it deems of exclusively national concern. Acceptance by all nations of the necessary restrictions is more likely if they are presented for ratification as constitutional legislation rather than as broad grants of authority to the UN to make laws at a later date.

If the nations are to agree on transferring the functions of government here outlined to the UN, it is clear that they will also be compelled to change its internal structure. This reorganization will be the result of compromise, and it would be foolish to advocate one particular governmental structure as superior to all possible alternatives. However, investigation of some of the problems will help to show how the security system would operate.

The power to legislate should be given to the General Assembly, but its legislative functions should be severely restricted by requiring that any basic change in the code written into the revised Charter should be subject to the veto of the great powers. Therefore the Assembly would be limited to the passing of administrative rules to guide the executive and judicial branches of the UN in their implementation of the security regulations.

In order to protect the great powers from being outvoted on these administrative decisions by a combination of the more numerous smaller states, some modification of simple majority vote rule would have to be adopted. It would be advisable to require that Assembly decisions be taken by a two-thirds majority and it might even be necessary to stipulate that this two-thirds majority should include the concurring votes of any three of the five large nations which are now permanent members of the Security Council. It would be possible under this arrangement for either the United States or the Soviet Union to be outvoted, but only on matters connected with the administration of the laws essential to the common safety of all nations.

Unless the American and Russian governments are willing to give up the right to veto the procedural legislation indispensable to the sustained operation of the inspection and control system, there is danger that a single negative vote on a

matter such as the allocation of funds might jeopardize the whole structure. Once the decision is taken to establish methods of enforcing laws prohibiting national armament and aggression, it follows that no country can insist on a unanimity rule that would render this control unworkable.

Under the Charter as it stands, the Security Council has a monopoly on the effective power of the UN. The Council is a drumhead court with the authority to declare arbitrarily what the law is in each dispute that comes before it and to apply against entire nations whatever penalty suits its pleasure. It is not surprising that only those large nations which have an assured majority in the Council have been willing to surrender any part of their veto power. No powerful government can be expected to submit itself and its citizens to the arbitrary judgment of the diplomatic agents of heavily armed and potentially hostile sovereign states. The composition and function of the Council must be radically altered before the unanimity rule as it applies to enforcement action can be modified.

When the basic law has been agreed upon, world courts erected, and the Assembly reconstituted as a legislative body, the Council will have lost its present function of determining when and if aggression has occurred. The laws regulating disarmament and prohibiting war would then supply an objective standard for the UN tribunals to apply. Once the facts had been proved against individual violators, the penalties would be enforced as provided in the established criminal code. There would be no place then for the Security Council in its present form.

The Council must be reconstructed as an executive commission or cabinet, responsible to the Assembly for the execution of the world laws. Its individual members might be chosen by the Assembly. In order to prevent domination of the executive by any one nationality, provision might be made for the rotation of the most important administrative posts among those nominated by the great powers, or a committee system might be devised to ensure the international character of the administrative departments. The main task of the executive branch would be the direction of the UN inspectors and police and the operation of the atomic development authority.

In this executive branch there is no place for the veto. If an official of the UN could, through a single negative vote, invalidate the judgment of the courts and suspend the action of the world police in order to protect citizens of his own nation from the consequences of their guilt, the security system would be a farce.

When the league structure of the UN has been replaced by a legal order, the reasons that force the major nations to cling to their veto rights in the Council will be less compelling. The Council would then no longer have the authority to pronounce arbitrary sentence on entire nations. It would be limited to ensuring the prompt execution of the judgments of the world courts against those who violated the regulations recognized as essential to the maintenance of peace and security. Many critics of the veto power have failed to see that their agitation for change in the voting rules of the present Security Council only tends to confirm the Russians in their suspicion that all attempts to amend the Charter are a conspiracy against them. Elimination of the unanimity rule as it applies to enforcement action is necessary, but it involves a fundamental revision of the Charter.

In addition, there is need for a system of UN courts with compulsory jurisdiction in all cases arising under the world laws. Trials of those apprehended by the inspectors for attempting to manufacture the prohibited weapons would be held in these courts. A Bill of Rights should be included in the Charter, guaranteeing a fair trial to those accused of violating the security code. This Bill of Rights would be binding only on the UN and its officials. It should not apply to the operation of national governments and could not be employed by the UN to interfere in the internal affairs of any nation.

These then are the changes in the structure of the UN which appear to be necessary if the familiar cycle of fear, competitive arming, and war is to be broken. They are admittedly radical changes and they involve a profound adjustment in traditional institutions and ways of thinking. It is quite possible, even probable, that national leaders both in this country and in Russia will refuse to face these realities until it is too late to draw back from the disaster to which propaganda and preparedness will have committed them.

The vast majority of the American people do not want another war, with all its incredible horrors of atomic and biological attack. Neither do the Russian people, who have already endured so much. But corrupted by power or blinded by national pride and doctrinaire beliefs, our leaders and theirs may refuse to make those sacrifices of national independence and armed strength that are the true cost of peace. Of one thing, we can be sure. If the UN is not strengthened in time to avert war, a long night of ignorance and brutality will descend upon our ingenious species. Neither we nor our children's children will live to see the faint light of a new dawn.

WHY I RESIGNED FROM ANNAPOLIS

by RALPH LEE SMITH

1

On a cold Sunday afternoon early this year, I sat down at my desk, took out a pad of official correspondence paper, and began writing a statement headed "Subject: Resignation from the United States Naval Academy and the United States Naval Service." Thus, I am an ex-midshipman — one of the many ex-midshipmen. Resignations from the Naval Academy last year created a rumbling here and an ominous note there. But from it all, we can only draw a picture of disunity and confusion; a picture of malcontents hastening on their own way, grumbling their pet peeves as they go. Such a picture certainly does nothing to encourage public interest in a real, current problem. It does nothing to further a constructive inquiry into the causes behind the resignations.

Some suppose that, with the cessation of hostilities, many "fair-weather sailors" have abandoned the Annapolis ship that kept them in the United States and out of the draft through the actual fighting. No conception could be more misleading. During the war, increased competition for Annapolis appointments itself served to perform a good preliminary sorting job, eliminating many of those whose motives were doubtful.

Further, if such a theory were correct, what explanation would there be for the resignation of midshipmen who had previously served as enlisted men, and even as officers? These "fleet competitors" came in the hard way, with the sincere intention of becoming career officers; yet they resigned. It is probably true that among the resignees are a few men who were waiting out the war at Annapolis; but to attach their stigma to the entire group serves only to perpetuate the unhealthy

With a sincere desire to become a career naval officer, RALPH LEE SMITH spent two years in preparing for the United States Naval Academy. He obtained his appointment in June, 1945, ranking sixth in the Honor School Nominations. After completing nineteen months at the Academy, he resigned as a third classman, and here he tells us his reasons.

situation which is bringing the resignations about. It goes without saying that the resignations in themselves pose a problem. However, they would be of comparatively little consequence were they not symptoms of the conditions which exist at the Academy — conditions which would merit close scrutiny even if there were no resignations at all.

Every civilian college has been surprised and gratified by the seriousness of its post-war students. Their maturity and capacity have prompted many colleges to make revisions and improvements in their programs, in order to develop more fully the superior qualities of these men. The Naval Academy, on the other hand, has found the maturity of many of its post-war students to be an unpleasant surprise and an endless annoyance. The Navy has no time for men who would overhaul the Academy's ancient, tradition-ridden program.

"If you don't like the way we do things here," our class was informed during a plebe summer lecture, "then get out."

I was at the Naval Academy for nineteen months. I remained there for my entire "plebe year," I went on the "youngster cruise," and I stayed for six months as a third classman. My impressions are not those of a man who resigns after a few tough months as a plebe. And, in resigning, I did not wait until I was out of the Academy to express my views. I wrote them into my resignation statement. In this statement, which is too long to quote in its entirety, I outlined my objections to the Naval Academy's "plebe" system, which were the main reasons for my resignation.

"The plebe system," I said in my statement, "is based upon the theory that it is permissible for one person to cause unnecessary discomfort to another person. I cannot personally conceive, by any stretch of the imagination, that there is any truth in such a doctrine; but rather than propound and examine theories, I should prefer to examine the system in actual operation. . . ."

"It is the privilege of every upperclassman to obtain what pleasure he may from the position to which the fourth classman is arbitrarily relegated. The character of the individual upperclassman — his ability to exercise properly the extraordinary authority thus placed in him — has no bearing on the matter. The plebe, for his part, may possibly possess those peculiar qualities of pride which, rather than mark the hypocrite, often manifest themselves in natures characterized by commendable idealism and high courage. For the purposes of the system, however, this does not matter. . . .

"Why this plebe system? I have asked the question many times. The answer is always the same. 'The plebe system teaches discipline. It teaches respect for authority.' Now, these are surely praiseworthy aims, and if the plebe system actually accomplished them, and if no other system could accomplish the same ends, then there might conceivably be some justification for the plebe system. But the bald facts are that the plebe system not only fails utterly in the accomplishment of these ends, but it fosters habits and modes of thinking that are despicable from a personal point of view and dangerous from a national point of view.

"The plebe system, as I have already observed, depends for its enforcement upon the individual upperclassman. However, by its very nature, it appeals to the narrow-minded, the self-important, the unintelligent, and the very few actually sadistic members of the upper class. It is this worst element which carries on the traditional indoctrination from year to year, in all its petty tyranny. It is not the finer men in the class who carry on the indoctrination, as would be necessary if the system were to be at all consistent with its professed objectives. The men of intelligence and sympathy, that small percentage to be found at the top of every organization, will have no part of it. These men, who are pre-eminently qualified to teach authority and discipline, both by precept and example — these are the men who simply will have nothing to do with the plebe indoctrination in its present form. So, the plebe finds that his most rigorous indoctrination comes from the hateful few, and the plebe who is possessed of some elements of pride almost invariably discovers that he has become a special target for the most devious devices at the command of the upperclassman.

"And what does this teach the plebe? Does it teach him respect for authority? Who that considers himself a man could respect these men who 'indoctrinate' him in such a fashion? Does it teach discipline? It does not. It produces exactly the opposite result, for the plebe soon discovers

that it pays him, not to adhere to the letter and the spirit of the regulations, but to become a 'system-beater.' He has no compunctions about attempting to avoid the performance of the many childish and anachronistic plebe rituals. . . . And, by the time the plebe himself has become an upperclassman, the cold mark of the indoctrination may be upon him, and the succeeding plebe classes will suffer for it. Is it actually considered desirable to inculcate into the naval officer these traits? Is it desirable to imbue him with this coldness of spirit — the naval officer, who, more than any other man, should devote his time to understanding men, and helping them? . . .

"What in the world does the Navy assume about the intelligence of its future officer corps, that it officially sanctions and encourages such an incredible system of teaching discipline? What is the purpose of the rigid mental requirements for entrance to the Academy? Why have mental requirements if the Navy is going to assume that the average intelligence of the brigade is so low that it is necessary to resort to such a device as the plebe system in order to teach discipline? . . .

"The Navy adoption of the new 'Holloway Plan' seems to be one more spectacle in this strange pageant of errors and inconsistencies. [Note: The Holloway Plan provides four-year scholarships for the training of regular Navy officers in the nation's colleges.] For, by endorsing such a plan, the Navy tacitly admits that it is entirely possible to produce a regular officer on a par with Annapolis graduates, without any of the ritualistic hocus-pocus of the plebe year. . . .

"What can be accomplished by two men who are pulling against each other that cannot be accomplished more efficiently and expeditiously by two men who are pulling together? . . .

"I am particularly anxious that it be understood that I fully appreciate the many fine things about the Navy. I do not mention them simply because they do not pertain to my resignation. The Navy can stand on a record of pure accomplishment that defies all assault. And yet, I am sure that the highest ranking officers would be the first to assure me that much remains to be done."

2

THE plebe system is an initiation ritual which has its own peculiarities, but which is probably not different from other initiations with which the public is more familiar. But there is one great, fundamental difference between the plebe indoctri-

nation and ordinary initiations. The ordinary college or fraternity initiation is nothing but tough, old-fashioned horseplay. The initiation pretends to no lofty purposes or attainments. At Annapolis, on the other hand, the plebe indoctrination is carried out seriously and grimly, with the noblest pretensions, and under the loftiest banners. It should, then, be studied in the same serious light, since the question of its actual accomplishments, in contrast to its theoretical ones, has been raised so persistently by a steadily increasing number of unquestionably earnest voices.

Since my resignation, proponents of the plebe system often ask me, "What is plebing?" Their purpose is obvious. For, no matter what phase of the plebe ritual I should choose as an answer to their question, they would then say, "Well now, is that so bad after all? Is it going to kill anybody?"

The answer is, of course not. The effect of the plebe system is more subtle, and it thus escapes general notice. It works upon the young mind, not the body. It teaches a fundamentally wrong way of thinking of, and of working with, other men. It is a four-year course in the extermination of the sympathies. It is a callous lesson in the procurement of pleasure through the physical and mental pain of another person. Its professed objectives are certainly not this; but beyond any question, it is able to produce such an effect in all too many minds.

Real sadism among the upperclassmen is the exception rather than the rule. Sadism is confined to certain individuals and to certain companies. Each plebe's experience, of course, is different. However, every plebe will, in the course of his fourth-class year, be the object of some real sadism. An example from my own experience is typical of what the plebe can occasionally expect.

One morning during "plebe summer" I decided that it was sufficiently cool to put a blanket on my bed when I made it up. My room was on the "Zero Deck," and after noon meal a first classman out on the formation terrace happened to look into my room and observe the blanket. He yelled in to me that I wasn't allowed to put a blanket on my bed and that I was to remove it. His section then marched off to class.

I didn't have time to remove the blanket and remake the bed at that moment. I was on my way to an ordnance drill, which took all afternoon.

The first classman was waiting for me when I returned to my room. No plebing of any kind was permitted during plebe summer, but this proved no obstacle for him. Although the beginning of the academic term was still two months away, he took my name, gave me his, and told me that, for my

offense, I was to look him up and "pay him a visit" when the term began. I was then thinking as a civilian, not a plebe, and I soon forgot the entire incident.

3

Two weeks after the beginning of the academic term, a first classman walked into my room.

"Do you know who I am?" he asked me.

"No, sir," I replied.

"Remember plebe summer? Remember the blanket on your bed?"

With some difficulty, I remembered the incident.

"Why didn't you come around?" he asked.

I told him I had forgotten all about it.

"You forgot, eh?" he grunted. "Well, you'd better get around to Room — tonight if you know what's healthy for you." He had remembered the incident for two months, and although my room had been changed, he had taken the trouble to look it up and had come all the way to the sixth wing, third deck, to find me.

That night I reported to his room. I went in, "sounded off" in the prescribed manner, and stood at rigid attention.

"Well, well, well," he grinned in anticipation. "I'm glad you could make it tonight, Mister Smith."

He turned to the four other first classmen who were playing cards in his room. "Gentlemen," he said, "this is the young man that made a blanket into his sack during plebe summer."

The first classmen turned around and eyed me briefly.

"See that little green stool over there?" my inquisitor asked me. Of course there was no stool there, but the correct answer to the question, and the one which I gave, was "Yes, sir."

"Get a dictionary," he said.

I got one from a shelf.

"Sit on the little green stool."

I squatted on the nonexistent stool.

"Now, open the dictionary to the definition of 'color' and read it to me."

I opened the dictionary, and discovered that the definition of "color" took a whole column. I began reading. The first classman paid no further attention to me; he watched the card game and joked with the players.

My legs in time gave out and I collapsed. The first classman glanced up from the game. "Get up," he said.

"I can't, sir," I replied.

His face hardened. "I said 'get up.' When I tell

you to do something, don't tell me that you can't."

I did the best I could. I'd get up into the sitting position and then tumble again. He finally looked up from the game again and smiled coldly. "Gettin' tired, buddy?"

I stared back at him and said, "No, sir."

He returned to the game. "You'd better keep tryin' then," he said.

After a while he said, "You need a rest. Try forty-nine push-ups."

So I started to do push-ups, but I wasn't in any shape to do forty-nine at that moment. He left the card table and stood over me. "I got an idea," he said. "How'd you like to swim to Baltimore?"

I didn't answer.

"Well?" he demanded impatiently.

"I don't know what you mean, sir."

"What! You never swam to Baltimore? How do you expect to be a sailor if you've never swum to Baltimore? It's a good thing I'm here to show you how."

I soon discovered what "swimming to Baltimore" was. A partition separated his closet from the rest of the room, and high up in this partition was a small sort of window. I climbed up to this window and balanced myself on its sill, with my feet dangling in the closet and the upper half of my body in the room. Then I started "swimming," doing the crawl or the breast stroke at his command. One can imagine what this soon began to do to my stomach and abdominal muscles, which were supporting my entire weight on the sill. At length, I found it exceedingly hard to breathe. He finally let me down. The study hour bell rang, so he finished off the evening by beating me with a wooden shower slipper, which is widely used for that purpose.

"I'm not through with you," he told me before I left. "Come back tomorrow night."

Some may think, "Oh well, they're just hot-headed boys, after all. They'll change when they grow up and mature." But this first classman wore on his drill shirt four campaign ribbons, one of which was the American Defense Ribbon with the metal "A" attachment. Thus, a simple calculation shows that he was serving in the Navy on the pre-war Atlantic submarine patrol while I was still in the ninth grade. He was between five and seven years my senior. He was a fully grown adult.

I was fortunate. Very little of this sort of thing went on in my own company. Friends of mine in other companies, however, were subjected to it nearly every night of their plebe year, real or fancied offenses of the plebes providing the excuse for the "treatment." If a first classman caught a plebe in some minor breach of the regulations, such

as turning his head in ranks or failing to run up the steps, he would often have him "come around" to his room. If the plebe failed to "come around," he would not only find himself placed on report for his offense, but he would also find that the other first classmen in the company would be reporting him at every opportunity. It would soon be known by all the first classmen in his company that he had failed to "come around" — that he was an "upstart" and needed some "treatment." His room might often be inspected by first classmen who were on watch while he was in class, and since there is no such thing as a spotless room, he would be reported for having a "dirty" room. In a like manner, he could be reported for wearing a "dirty" uniform at formation.

The extra duty would pile up, and the demerits on his record would mount. In short, he would find himself caught up in a bewildering web from which there was no escape. It is the first classman's option of reporting delinquent underclassmen that puts the teeth into the plebe system. The First Class Midshipman Commander of our Battalion once said, at a meeting of the Battalion's plebes which he called at the beginning of the year, "This is a vicious system in which *you* obey." And he was right.

The Academy's regulations against hazing are down in black and white in the official Naval Academy Regulation Book, but, for obvious reasons, no plebe ever tells. And unless the plebe tells, no one will ever know of each individual incident. In all the time I was at the Academy, no upper-classman was ever reported for hazing.

Many other phases of the plebing, such as the indoctrination which is carried on in the mess hall, while not strictly "hazing," are nonetheless often harder to take than any hazing. Plebing is scientific and systematic humiliation; and to my knowledge, nothing beneficial has ever been accomplished by purposeless humiliation.

The Academy officers know perfectly well what goes on. They graduated from the Academy themselves. "I couldn't sit down all during my plebe year," Captain Ebert, Assistant to the Commandant, told me when he discussed my resignation with me. And still the system flourishes under the tacit protection of the Executive Department.

4

In my statement, I had included only a brief paragraph on the Naval Academy's instruction program; I felt that its shortcomings were too well

known in Academy circles to need any elaboration on my part. However, since my resignation, I have discovered that my civilian friends had no conception of the inadequacies of the Annapolis academic system.

The Academy handles its academic affairs in a strange way. At the beginning of the year, the midshipmen are issued printed assignment sheets in every subject. These assignment sheets cover the full semester's lessons, number by number, day by day. I recall my plebe year chemistry assignment sheet, which even gave the assignments inch by inch on the page, to the nearest tenth of an inch! Thus, a typical assignment read, "Week of 7-13 November, First Assignment Number 23, Page 167, 1.2 inches to 3.4 inches; 3.9 inches to 4.2 inches: Page 169, 2.5 inches to 3.6 inches: Page 173, 1.1 inches to 1.5 inches; 3.0 inches to 3.6 inches," and so on. A man whose ruler was scaled in sixteenths instead of tenths wouldn't have a chance!

Every day, every man in the brigade studies exactly the subject matter covered by a set of numbers on the assignment sheet. It doesn't matter if there wasn't sufficient time in class to cover yesterday's work. He studies today's work.

The result of such a system is only too obvious. One lives a life of "day-tight compartments," on a scale from which the originator of the phrase, Sir William Osler, would have shrunk in horror. It doesn't matter what happened yesterday. They are no longer taking grades on that. It doesn't matter what will happen tomorrow. They're not taking grades on that yet. As soon as one day's work is finished, the midshipman pushes it completely out of his mind and resurrects it again only at the end of the course, if it is necessary to know it in order to get through the last of a long series of tests.

This is a deathblow to any comprehension of the theory underlying the work. One goes through the Academy's mathematics courses gaining, not a cumulative understanding of what he is doing, but only an increasing proficiency in the mechanics of juggling the figures according to the rules of the game. A computing machine would have no trouble with an Academy math course. It doesn't have to understand anything. It just works.

The daily test grades determine a midshipman's mark. The determination of his final grade for the course is a simple job of adding. Teachers are changed every month in every subject, and no teacher knows his students. Like some fantastic Rube Goldberg machine, the great intellectual mill grinds on. A grade of 4.00 is 100 per cent. If a man's grades add up to 2.50, he passes. If they add up to 2.49, he fails.

A midshipman, it is said, is a gentleman by Act of Congress, but the Department of English, History, and Government sees to it that he is a gentleman on his own hook. Every midshipman, fourth class, gets a course in what might aptly be called refinement by cerebral osmosis. He receives a gigantic book and a handsomely printed assignment sheet, and proceeds to spend a semester on "World Literature." On the fourth of February he reads a part of *The Iliad* and on the thirteenth of May he finishes with *The Hairy Ape*. During this time each midshipman memorizes several prescribed selections of poetry. (I recall a classmate who gave a flawless rendition of the required selection from Tennyson's "Ulysses," and then named Browning as its author.)

The daily tests were the crowning touch. I recall vividly one of the ten questions which were given to test our comprehension of *King Lear*. "Whose bed," asked the Lieutenant Commander who happened to be our instructor for that month, "had a quote sated warmth unquote?" It was on questions such as this that our understanding and appreciation of world literature were determined.

5

I NEVER took the Academy's leadership course — it is given during second-class year. The textbook is a rather slim volume with a green cover entitled "Leadership in the New Age — How to Succeed!" (The exclamation point is not mine.) Every day the second classman consults his printed assignment sheet and reads some pages from this book. He then goes to class and takes the daily test of subjective questions on what the text contained. If he can't recall what the book said about these questions, he is simply not a leader on that particular day. Thus, leadership theory is taught by a system of daily tests, and leadership practice is taught by the system of upper-class indoctrination of the helpless plebes.

There is a library on the Academy grounds, but its purpose remains a mystery. No course at the Academy requires any kind of individual research. No library work of any description is necessary. A man can go through the entire four-year course without having the faintest idea of what the inside of the library looks like. The midshipman's time is so well accounted for that time spent in the library is almost always time that has been borrowed from another — and, in the Academy's viewpoint, a more pressing — task.

At one time the library was open during evening study hour, but of the three thousand men in the

brigade, only two or three visited it at this time. Many a night no one signed out for the library. The practice was therefore discontinued shortly after its inauguration.

This does not speak so poorly for the midshipmen as one might think, for everybody needs every minute of the evening study hour to memorize the next day's work. But let us assume that one had a spare hour at the time the library was open, and that he desired to go there. He would first have to "sign out" on the blackboard on his deck. Next he would have to go down to his Battalion Office and sign out there. Then he would go up to the main office and sign out there. Then he could go to the library. On his way back, he would have to reverse the procedure. If he missed any of the six steps along the way, he would be placed on report and would receive ten demerits and three hours of extra duty, which would rob him of all his spare time for the better part of a week. If a man had some extra time during study hour, it didn't pay him to go to the library. It paid him to lie down and get a little sorely needed sleep.

The assignment of men who were surely fine command officers to posts in the academic department, where their lack of real knowledge of their subject is only too painfully obvious, is one of the most serious failings of the academic program. Often an officer who has been out of the Academy for fifteen or twenty years is assigned a "tour of duty" at the Academy, to teach a subject that he has completely forgotten.

This situation is not only an injustice to the midshipmen, but it is a strange sort of indignity to visit upon the officers, who have acquitted themselves so well at posts of command, only to be assigned positions in which they inevitably made themselves appear very foolish.

The advent of Rear Admiral J. L. Holloway to the superintendentship of the Academy on January 15, 1947, is popularly supposed to presage an academic reform. I hope it will. But to the best of my knowledge, no basic changes have yet been made.

6

I SUBMITTED my statement on Monday morning, January 6. I supposed that Commander Hathaway, my Battalion Officer, would call me in that morning for an interview, as is the usual procedure in the case of resignations.

Monday morning passed. No word. Monday afternoon passed. Tuesday morning passed. From the Battalion Office, absolute silence.

Tuesday afternoon, during the seventh period study hour, my room door opened, and in walked an ensign whom I had never seen before. He introduced himself as Ensign Walt Kristage, Class of '47 (which graduated in June, 1946, on the accelerated wartime schedule), and he said that he had just "reported aboard" as the new assistant crew coach. He had reported to Captain Estabrook, the Executive Officer of the Academy, that afternoon. He had found Captain Estabrook reading my statement. Captain Estabrook had handed him the statement and asked him, "Do you think this is true?" Ensign Kristage had read it, and had expressed the opinion that it was strong but that there was unquestionably a good deal of truth in it.

I talked to Ensign Kristage for the remainder of the study hour. I am still not sure of the exact nature of his mission, and I don't think that he knew either. Captain Estabrook had sent him up to "talk" to me.

Wednesday afternoon I received the message, "Report to Captain Estabrook after classes today." After classes I reported to him in his office.

"I'm busy now," he said. "I'll call you in tomorrow."

Thursday passed, and Friday, and Saturday, and Sunday. Monday morning I decided that I had waited long enough. I went down to his office and found him busy with some papers.

"Sir," I asked, "what has become of my resignation?"

"Oh yes," he said. "Sit down."

The interview got off to a bad start.

"As far as I can ascertain," Captain Estabrook began, "the only reason for submitting a statement of the type that you have is to drum up an argument merely for the sake of arguing."

Now, I was really unprepared for anything quite so obtuse as that. He asked me many questions which I felt were well covered in my statement. At one point he said, "How would you abolish the plebe system?"

"If I were in your position," I said, "I would do it by signing my name to an order to that effect."

"How would you enforce it?"

"The same way that all Naval Academy regulations are enforced."

"But," he objected, "even under the present setup, it is quite impossible to obtain complete compliance with any regulation."

"Is that," I asked him, "any reason for not having regulations? Does the fact that it is impossible to enforce completely regulations on drunkenness render it necessary to strike such regulations from

the books? If you were to take such a view, you'd have to abolish every regulation."

The interview, unfortunately, was not very profitable for either of us.

The next day I received another message. This one said "Report to Captain Ebert immediately." I had hoped for an interview with Captain Ebert, the Assistant to the Commandant, who appears to be an exceptionally capable officer.

My interview with Captain Ebert lasted for an hour and a quarter, and it brought to light several points that I had not touched upon directly in my statement. Captain Ebert is writing a book on leadership, and at the beginning of the interview he asked me to read a few pages of his manuscript which dealt with courage. The pages were not an argument for the plebe system as an instrument for teaching courage, but the implication was obvious. On the surface, it appears to be a good point, and yet it will not stand up under close scrutiny; for it is an inescapable truth that the Academy present program produces a large percentage of "system beaters" and I can discover nothing that is courageous or morally commendable in system-beating. The pages of Captain Ebert's manuscript which I read spoke of several great contemporary naval leaders whose success is surely due, among other things, to their courage. But if the Navy assumes the credit for endowing these men with courage, it is certainly assuming too much. I personally am persuaded that, no matter which profession a man chooses, he will need courage of a high order to succeed. All life requires courage. Our great naval officers of today, had they chosen some other profession, would have pursued it with the same resoluteness and courage that they have demonstrated in their present profession.

Captain Ebert brought up another interesting point. Every year, he said, the Navy is able to put its finger on seven or eight men who are unfit to command. How? By observing their improper exercise of their authority over the plebes. The fallaciousness of this reasoning is almost too evident to merit discussion. Taking the Navy's own admission at its face value, we need merely point to these seven or eight men a year that the Navy is able to recognize and label. My answer to the Navy is, You are creating this problem yourself. And if this be one of the purposes of the plebe year, then just consider how many hundreds of thick skins you create each year in order to catch these seven or eight. So you caught eight! I could name you eight in my own company who have been so thoroughly "indocctrinated" that they show themselves, in their relations with their juniors and their seniors,

to be utterly despicable in every way. And there are twenty-four companies! The fact remains that no man, upon first entering the Naval Academy, could ever conceive of behaving in such a manner toward his fellows and associates as many a first classman does with no qualm, no compunction, and with the full approval of the authorities.

The thing is ugly. The Navy opens wide the gates of malice and self-importance to the upper-classmen — nay, persuades them that it is their duty and obligation to enter — and then drops the axe, systematically and annually, upon seven or eight of the many heads that accept the invitation. Even those who escape the axe will find, as officers, that success in the handling of men will require a complete revision of the concepts upon which the plebe system is based.

I had, of course, expected some sort of "official reaction" to my statement from the Academy officers through whose hands it passed. But there was a reaction from another quarter that I could not have foreseen. In some way, word of my statement seemed to pass through the entire brigade. Dozens of strangers came into my room and asked me if I had a copy of it that they could read. I had no copy; but a week after I submitted it I obtained my original statement from the Chief Clerk, who had typed copies of it for official use. I put it on my desk, and there it remained until I left the Academy. At all hours of the day, friends and strangers alike came in to read it.

"It expresses," I was told over and over again, "exactly what I've always felt, but I've never been able to put it in words."

"Mimeograph the damned thing," remarked the company's leisurely cynic, "and we'll all use it to resign!"

Another friend asked if he could make a copy of the statement.

"I want to send it home," he said. "My parents want me to stay. They don't understand."

Thereafter the "copying campaign" began. I have no idea how many copies of my statement were made, but several times, when I was with groups of midshipmen who didn't know me, I was shown copies of my own statement and told to read it.

One day a stranger came in, read my statement, and said to me, "Why don't you have this published?"

"Even supposing that I could," I replied, "what would be the purpose?"

"The purpose?" he echoed. "Why, it's what you believe, and it's what I believe, and it's what hundreds of decent guys in this place believe."

GREAT LADIES OF LONDON

by SIR OSBERT SITWELL

English author and critic, SIR OSBERT SITWELL is now writing one of the great autobiographies of our time. The first volumes of it have appeared under the Atlantic-Little, Brown imprint. In *Left Hand, Right Hand!* he told of his family heritage, and in lovely detail of Renishaw Hall in Derbyshire, which has been the family seat since the seventeenth century. In *The Scarlet Tree* he wrote of his parents and of the painful Victorian education to which he and his sister Edith were subjected. Osbert graduated from Eton, and then his father, despite the boy's protests, began to plan for his military career. "Knocking about with a sword," his father assured him, "provides excellent exercise, and proves splendid training for afterlife." After serving briefly in the Hussars, Osbert received his commission as Ensign in the Grenadier Guards and was assigned to duty in the Tower of London in the golden age before World War I.

This is the third of five installments to be drawn from his forthcoming volume, *Great Morning!* — THE EDITOR

I

At the age of seventy-four, though she no longer rode to hounds, the activity of my Great-aunt Blanche Sitwell was amazing. She would run up and down stairs like a young woman, and the many contradictory beliefs that inspired her conversation gave it a special quality, an earnest yet humorous vagueness. In spite of her own carelessness in matters of dress, in spite of her strong and unconventional radical views, she paid great attention to the manners, outward aspect, and even clothes, of her young relatives. Letters would rain down on me on subjects extending from the way one's hair had been cut recently, and who was the best contemporary barber in London, to a discussion of tendencies on the English stage, the disestablishment of the Church, the experiences of her father's old friend and brother-in-law, Sir Frederick Stovin, in the Peninsular War, the sweated-labor conditions in East End tailors' shops, and the abolition of the House of Lords.

All these letters, it was understood, had to be answered immediately, or a frantic note would arrive, demanding the meaning of my silence. I don't know that my aunt and I shared many interests; but this in no way spoiled our friendship. At least we shared two: a universal curiosity about people, and an attitude of rather critical attention to my father's activities. Moreover, we understood each other, and she allowed me to see that in several directions she depended on me; an attitude that is always flattering, and ministers to the self-respect of the young. Her greatest pleasure

now was to bring young relatives together, or put them in touch with other cousins, connections, or friends. The last surviving member of her generation, she held all the strings of family relationships in her hands. Once, I remember, when I was asking her some questions about a cousin with whom I was not acquainted, she said, suddenly, with a kind of wistfulness, "Really, I believe soon I shall be the only person left who remembers *anything!*"

When in London, and not on duty, I would repair every Sunday afternoon to her house in Egerton Crescent, off the Brompton Road, for tea. Usually I would arrive rather early, and sometimes in the summer I would find her and her dear old friend, Miss Anne Hutchinson, with hair spun of the finest white silk, both dressed in black, walking in the garden of the Crescent, which, with its trees, trim grass, and green-painted tubs filled with red geraniums, still appeared to retain something of the peace of the 3330 or so Sundays of the Victorian reign. The hooting of motors, the rumble of buses, seemed far away as these two Victorian ladies paced slowly up and down in the rich, smoke-laden Sunday sunlight. Or, again, in the autumn, I would discover them already in the drawing room, where the flickering tongues of the fire caught the surfaces of hundreds of small objects, all clean, polished, and bright, shining on walls and tables.

Many incidents that occurred in my aunt's drawing room return to my mind — one, in particular, which retains its own germ of farcical fun. My brother, my sister, and I were all having tea there

one Sunday afternoon; Edith was sitting in an old-fashioned armchair, the loose cover for which happened to be lying near-by on a chair against the wall. Suddenly we heard the front doorbell ring, and then the voice, well known to us, of an old friend of my parents. She was very kind, but such a great bore that my sister had already pleaded illness as an excuse for not seeing the old lady that very day at luncheon. Now here she was! And my sister appealed to my brother and me to rescue her in some way.

What was to be done? Footsteps were already on the stairs. Telling my sister to sit absolutely still, we seized the loose cover, which fortunately proved to be very loose, fitted it over her and the chair, and carried it — and her — out of the room in triumph. Only just in time; for we passed the new arrival outside the door, and explained to her that we would be back in a moment, but that one leg of the chair was unsteady, and that my aunt had just asked us to put it away downstairs, in case she forgot, and allowed someone to sit in it. So we smuggled Edith downstairs, and quietly to the front door, ourselves returning to continue our tea with a distracted aunt. But she always entered into the spirit of any situation, and did not combat our prejudices. No doubt she harbored a good many of her own.

A connection of ours to whom my aunt introduced my sister and me at this time was Lady Colvin, the wife of Sir Sidney, for many years Keeper of the Prints and Drawings at the British Museum. Sir Sidney, the author and editor of many publications, had been Robert Louis Stevenson's most faithful and intimate friend. Lady Colvin had, before she married Sir Sidney, been the widow of my grandfather's second cousin, a clergyman, and the younger son of Frank Sitwell of Barmoor Castle. In spite of the cloth he wore, he had proved a most unsatisfactory husband, and my Aunt Blanche, who had remained friends with Mrs. Sitwell when she had left him, had greatly admired her for the courage and uncomplaining dignity with which she had behaved in days when the position, according to English law, of a wife was still particularly cruel, and even her own money became the inalienable property of the husband. Moreover, Fanny, as her friends called her, had, in the first place, introduced Stevenson to Colvin, and she could therefore in a sense claim to have discovered him. And if Robert Louis Stevenson's letters to her second husband form the most sustained collection of his correspondence, extending, as it does, over a period of more than twenty years, yet there can be no doubt, equally, that it was in

the early years his finest letters were written, and written to her.

Now, some forty years later, the former Mrs. Sitwell — as during Stevenson's life she had remained — had become Lady Colvin, an old lady, with a fine aquiline profile and white hair. Ladies of her generation as a rule employed no make-up, but Lady Colvin was heavily rouged in the artificial and conventional manner of the French eighteenth century, and this accorded well with her appearance, which possessed sufficient distinction to allow itself such frivolities. An almost professional diviner of literary talent, she had been the friend of many other writers besides Stevenson — and the enemy of several others. Wilde, for example, had described her as "a parrot with a tongue of zinc"; an epigram that had gone the rounds for a whole dreary decade, and still sounds witty and significant until you ring it on the counter.

Lady Colvin I used to see at every concert and first night to which I went, and she was invariably accompanied by the rotund and polished form of Sir Claude Phillips. During the intervals, he would remain in the stalls, to talk to her, while she continually fluttered a fan, at the graceful manipulation of which she was a mistress. Few of her contemporaries, versed though they were in this aid to fascination — indeed, this art — rivaled her in it; only Lady Brougham, and in a setting very different, excelled her.

My sister was a more frequent visitor to the Colvins than was I, but I used also to go to their house, and they were most kind to both of us. Theirs was the first salon in which I set foot, and I recall, rather mistily over the gap of thirty years, the pink glow of the drawing room in Palace Gardens Terrace; Sir Sidney, sitting with his back to the window, with, outlined against it, his head at the particular downward angle at which he held it, the edges of his beard blurred by the light; Lady Colvin, armed with her fan, reclining on a sofa; and general talk, witty and interesting, and not, as in most houses of the time, about politics — for political controversies were then beginning to rage — but about pictures and books.

2

I HAVE always preferred private houses to restaurants, and conversation to shouting. Mrs. Asquith, afterwards Countess of Oxford and Asquith, by nature no less than by habit ever hospitable, used to invite me to Downing Street, then a center of such an abundance and intensity of life

as it had not seen for a hundred years and is never likely to see again: for at that time it contained a social dynamo as hostess. Alas, her example, and the influence it exercised on politics, were sufficient to enjoin, for the future, carefulness, and to exalt a contrary model, of primness, smugness, sealed lips, and *Punch* humor. Mrs. Asquith's audacious comments, those called forth from a witty and original mind, were governed, in spite of their apparent sharpness, by invariable standards — though standards not of taste, but of truth.

In the first place it must be borne in mind that she was an extremely religious woman. It has been related, for example, that at the time of the Armistice in November, 1918, she went down on her knees in a crowded omnibus, to say a prayer. If this be true, it will have been a genuine demonstration of feeling, for she lacked all self-consciousness or pretense. She got on well with the simple; the silly and the flighty, the greedy and the mean, were her quarry; but even the barbs she directed verbally against these, though outspoken, were ruled by the strictest Scottish moral sense. In art and life, she was always on the right side.

In Downing Street, as indeed in every house over which she presided, she was superb. She knew how to make the interior of a house lovely, and always imparted to it a particular atmosphere, impossible to mistake, so that entering it, you would at once have recognized whose home it was. Her conversation was inspiring: in the common phrase, she spoke her mind; or at any rate with the utmost rapidity she thought of things she would like to say, and said them. Nor was she in the least troubled by that bugbear of the polite, where to speak them. (One must not be rude in one's own house, or in anyone else's, and I remember my father adding another prohibition to the list by remarking to me once, with a glance severe and reproachful, "I'm surprised! Rude to me in my own motorcar!")

But Mrs. Asquith would say what came into her head — often difficult to couch in civil language — in her own house, in your house, in the house of a friend, in the streets, in church, in shops, in theaters, in motorcars and in buses. For example, when she came to stay with me in Scarborough a few years later, meeting my father for the first time, she glanced at him critically and, pressing my arm, remarked in a sympathetic, hissing, and overaudible whisper: "Oh, Osbert, what a look in the eye! *Cold as ice!* But if you want help, let me know, and I'll talk to him!" And of dinner parties in her own house, it was remarked that there was no one present who did not leave the dining room a

better man or woman than he or she had entered it — the guests, their souls purged by pity and by terror, because of what their hostess had said to them; the hostess, for what she had said to the guests.

Her kindness — active, as opposed to the negative quality that often passes for it — was as frequent and touching as her faults were obvious. She was even more generous than extravagant, even more kind than sharp. She loved the young, revered the old, but had little patience with those in middle life, of middling mind or character. Yet, in spite of her experience of the world, she remained naïve, shrewd, uneducated, though to a degree well-read and versed in humanity; a child of brilliant perspicacity, wandering through the world, saying exactly what she thought and felt, telling others, too, what they ought to feel and think, in language that by its vivid inspiration, its gift of the art of summary, could lay a drawing room waste. She spoke, in those tones so personally stressed, before she had time to regret it: as when, on one occasion taken to see the Corot-esque work of a young painter who dabbled in willow trees and silver sunrises, all caught in mist, she pronounced before she could choke back her judgment, "A mouse's sneeze"; a remark which would somehow reduce the afflatus of any artist.

For many years, Mrs. Asquith slept badly and, waking early in the morning, would write a collection of penciled notes to her friends (how well, on reading this, they will recall the angular handwriting on the yellow-white envelope!) about various topics that had caught her attention or were occupying her mind. These would be headed 4.30 A.M. or 5.00 A.M., and would usually run to some pages. I have still in my possession one of them — though this time, quite short — which she sent me in later years. She had been annoyed by the judgment Mrs. Woodrow Wilson had passed on her in a recent book, and had telephoned one evening to ask me urgently to come round the following morning at 12.15 to have half an hour's consultation with her. Accordingly, the next day, I arrived at 44 Bedford Square at the hour indicated. Lady Oxford was expected down in a moment, and meanwhile the butler handed me a letter. The envelope was unfastened: on the outside were instructions to the butler.

WHITMORE

Give this letter to Mr. O. Sitwell *before* he comes into the library at 12.30 today.

Taking out the contents, I found two single sheets written in pencil, and glancing first, as often

I do, at the signature, was surprised, because the handwriting was so pleasantly different from my own, to find it signed with my own name! It was dated "5 A.M. the 22nd Sept: '37," and ran:—

DEAREST OSBERT

To save you the trouble of reading the lies written about me by Mrs. Woodrow Wilson (in a book you will never read) I would like you to write a letter to *The Times* or the *Daily Telegraph*, to say that your attention has been drawn to a paragraph in a book . . . lately published by Putnam. That you have been a friend of mine all your life, and resent what she has written, and even doubt whether it is accurate. You can add "Lady Oxford has *never* spoken ill of *anyone*, and though she has known many members of the Royal Family, she is not a snob: nor is she as vulgar as Mrs. Woodrow Wilson portrays her.

"Yours, etc.

"OSBERT SITWELL"

All this, Lady Oxford thought was the truth. It was certainly correct to say she was not a snob (indeed, the fact that when Mr. Asquith was Prime Minister, twenty years before, she used occasionally at The Wharf to insist on the butler taking part in charades in the drawing room, in order to impersonate the more ponderous members of the Cabinet—roles for which he showed an undoubted flair—a fact that earned much censure, was, in a way, proof of it). But it was more difficult, I thought, to declare so roundly that she had never spoken ill of anyone: it would have been accurate, I believe, to have said that she had never made an unkind remark for the sake of its unkindness.

I spent the half hour that ensued after she appeared, therefore, in trying to convince her of that of which others, when I am angry, have so often tried to persuade me: that such statements as those of Mrs. Woodrow Wilson carry no weight, and that to write a letter to the press in refutation of them will only serve to call attention to the words and opinions to which you are objecting. But I do not know that, in a part so new to me, I was altogether successful.

3

I RECEIVED also a great deal of kindness from Lady Brougham and her family. She was older than Lady Oxford, belonged indeed to a previous generation and to an opposite school. Earlier I mentioned her as outshining even Lady Colvin in the art of fan manipulation, and she was certainly the most vivacious wielder of that instrument that it was ever my good fortune to meet. She fanned herself with an inimitable allurements, born of restlessness, and

perhaps of a certain shyness of disposition, though this was the last quality one would have suspected in so accomplished, so finished a product of her age. More than that, she was an old lady of real beauty and of infinite charm, carrying with her, right through her old age to the day of her death, not only her winning air but the looks for which she had been famous.

In days when private life was an art, she raised it even higher in the scale, and, as an old lady, her life was largely spent in her own house, for, apart from driving about in a brougham—to the use of which vehicle, named after the first Lord Brougham, she still adhered solely—she seldom went out in London. And no wonder! For everything in her house was beautifully ordered, maintained, and arranged, and even when not exactly beautiful, formed part, as it were, of an engrossing work of art: full of character, even down to the huge eighteenth-century volume of colored engravings of flowers which stood propped open on an eighteenth-century chair, on the landing at the top of the stairs, as if to refresh you after the climb. These plates showed *Strelitzia* and other exotic blossoms, and nearly every day were different, the book being changed, or opened at a different page.

In the seventies, Lady Brougham had been one of the first of her generation to take an interest in furniture and decoration, and her large mansion in Chesham Place, though naturally in the idiom of her day, and not in that of ours, manifested an impeccable and individual style, just as did her personal adornments: the diminutive piece of lace she wore on the top of her head, like a small cap, her earrings, and lace and black silk dress. There was something about her of the freshness of a vivid-hued carnation, even in old age. She remained debonair and jaunty, and though she must have had cares and sorrows of her own, appeared more interested in the worries of other people.

It was the greatest pleasure to see her, to talk to her, to have luncheon with her—even the food was unlike, and better than, that elsewhere—or to sit for a few minutes talking to her at tea, in her room, so imbued with individuality, with its chairs covered in chintz of a narrow red and white stripe, and its flowers, that were never to be seen in other houses, huge arching sprays of green *Cymbidium* with scarlet centers, or the coralline shields of the *Anthurium*. She owned many lovely pieces of furniture, inherited from her father, who had been one of the celebrated connoisseurs residing in Florence in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

But these objects could constitute a source of embarrassment as well as of delight to her guests,

because she possessed, too, a standard of generosity that was innate in her, but completely her own. If someone admired, let us say, an Italian tortoiseshell cabinet of the seventeenth century, she would cry with the impetuosity that she had plainly preserved from her youth, but combined with an odd humility, a genuine surprise that you should like anything belonging to her, "Do you really think it pretty? — You must have it!" This sounded merely one of the phrases that some people use; but in her mouth these words were sincere and later acquired reality: for, as likely as not, by the time the visitor returned home in the evening, he would find it waiting for him in the hall.

Further, just as she could infuse gayety into other people by her presence, so, too, she could be witty, witty as a rule in a self-depreciating way, for though sure of herself, she thought nothing of her attainments or qualities; and this gave an added point to the things she said, which, for their value, depended usually on two things — her unfailing shrewdness of judgment, and her use of the appropriate but unexpected adjective. In illustration of this aptitude, I was told by a friend that when King Edward VII went to stay at Brougham, he arrived in a mood that rendered him difficult to please. Plainly something had gone wrong. At dinner, the King was still silent, so Lady Brougham began to talk, asking: —

"Did you notice, Sir, the soap in Your Majesty's bathroom?"

"No!"

"I thought you might, Sir. It has such an amorous lather!"

After that, the King's geniality returned.

4

My Aunt Londesborough, on the other hand, though only some fifteen years younger than Lady Brougham, offered, in appearance, manner, and in her houses, as distinctive an epitome of the Edwardian Age, even though some of the Victorian tenets still survived in her: as, for example, that of being kind to the young people of the family, for whose benefit or advancement, as she saw it, she would take a rather nebulous infinity of trouble. She had now disposed of St. Dunstan's, and was established in a marble-lined mansion in Green Street: where, though the background was a little more confined, the same lavishness and air of splendor as formerly still marked the numerous parties she gave. She had not long returned from the Durbar, laden with large presentation portraits

of jeweled and dusky potentates, which, in spite of their color, resembled white elephants in size and usefulness, and were discreetly hung in the country. She had also brought back with her an Indian boy, Bimbi, and when she gave a dance, he would stand, in his native robes and high pink turban, on one of the landings of the marble staircase, directing the guests in the manner of an eighteenth-century page.

Here, too, as at Mrs. Asquith's, you met many foreigners, albeit of a different kind, not foreign diplomats, politicians, artists, or musicians, but Hungarians and Austrians of the hunting sort. In addition, there was always a solid mass of relatives: among them my cousin, the Duchess of Beaufort, and her two daughters, Blanche and Diana Somerset: gay and delightful girls, full of zest, with an ability to instill amusement and liveliness into their surroundings, into all they touched — into the hunting field itself, I suppose, for I believe they were always eager, even when in London, to return to Badminton, and to resume a life spent largely in the saddle; anxious, however much they might be enjoying themselves, for the autumn to bring back cubbing, and for the winter to allow them whole months pursuing the fox.

With a tolerance that, as I had learned when attached to the cavalry regiment at Aldershot, not all those who seem to have been born on horseback can show, they teased me, in their warm, luxuriant voices, so typical of their family, and laughed at me, but did not in the least mind my being interested in other things.

With the sumptuousness of the entertainments at my Aunt Londesborough's and at Mrs. Keppel's I could contrast the archiepiscopal austerities of Lambeth, with its cohorts of curates devouring the modern equivalent of locusts and wild honey. (But even the wild honey would have proved, I apprehend, to be tame.) After dinner, at 10.15 or 10.30 in the evening, many guests repaired to the Chapel, which had been so hideously frescoed in the time of my Tait relative. I remember with what relief — for the company of the clergy sometimes intimidates me, who am frightened by no other men — I used to ask for a taxi, and tell the driver to take me to the Alhambra, where I arrived just in time to hear the last half hour of a revue, entitled, if I remember rightly, *Swat That Fly!* And there I would meet all my friends from the Brigade, admiring the serried ranks of beauties on the stage, the curls and legs and eyes in line.

I recollect very clearly the first occasion, too, on which I accompanied my sister to dine at Lambeth. It was an immense dinner party, and as we were leaving, the hall was full of fellow guests waiting

for vehicles to take them away. The butler had on this occasion with great trouble procured us a taxi, and I can see now my sister's expression of anguish, when, in the press, wishing to reward him, I inadvertently clamped half a crown instead into the inexpectant palm of Mr. Laurence Binyon, who, like us, was waiting for a cab. He remained for some moments, holding it in his hand, with a rapt gaze: and I always considered it most generous of him in after years never to mention the incident to me.

5

OF MORE recent friends, and with a very different personality, there was Lady Sackville, certainly one of the remarkable characters of the period. From time to time, I would go to dine with her alone. I would find her, before dinner, sitting in the Persian Room; a small paneled room that, though inappropriate for England, was not without a certain fitness for her, because the arabesques, and small tightly painted roses and cypresses blazoned on the walls recalled Granada, and Andalusia, and thus the strain in her own blood from which sprang the particular strange quality she possessed.

She was now middle-aged and fat, but the lines of her face were pretty with an almost classical prettiness, and her expression could be extremely seductive. The long, hollow, hooded upper lids that so clearly mark those of Sackville descent, and as a rule show beneath them eyes of a somber melancholy, in her case displayed eyes, rather prominent, of a living, changing but rather shallower fire, for to all her gifts she had given a material direction. Peasant and aristocrat, she combined many curious and conflicting traits, lived in magnificence and could live in squalor, was capable of creating both, was the slave of beautiful things, and yet must always change her surroundings, however splendid they might be.

The decoration of her houses mirrored her personality; yet the ancestral cave in the Albaicin was to be detected in it, no less than the ancestral palace. The large windows, full of objects in colored glass, gave a living warmth to the rooms; the rugs, the tortoise-shell and lapis furniture, all imparted an air of luxury and of invention. Indeed, Lady Sackville lived in a world almost entirely imaginary. She never told one the same story twice; for, to her, truth was relative and depended on how she felt when she was talking; and while the tales often retained the same features, in each new version these would be rearranged, albeit with a surprising ease, grasp, and power of conviction. But there

was nothing petty about her: she was capable of acts of imaginative kindness and of cruelty, she was clever and cunning and silly and brave and timid and avaricious, extravagant and most generous, possessed the best taste and the worst, and was, in all, one of the most vivid personalities I have ever met. And I am sure that she never afforded her friends, still less those nearest to her, a dull moment; the opposition in her character of aristocrat and Spanish dancer, gypsy and woman of taste, was too pronounced to allow of it.

Occasionally, I would be taken to supper, too, at All Souls' Place — that piazza consisting of one house behind All Souls' Church in Langham Place — by Felicity Tree and by her sister Iris, who was then very young, but possessed a honey-colored beauty of hair and skin that I have never observed in anyone else. Viola Tree, and her husband, Alan Parsons, would often be there as well, Viola contributing her own particular vein of warmhearted vagueness and humor, and her spontaneous and inexhaustible gift of mimicry; while, singly or together, Sir Herbert and Lady Tree could be depended upon to supply an entertainment of the most delicious personal fantasy, based on the flimsiest and most delicate foundation of sense.

Though I, with the rest of the world, have seen quoted and heard repeated so many of Sir Herbert's remarks and exploits — as when, for example, he went to a post office and asked for a penny stamp, and on being given one demanded, "Have you no others?" and, after a sheet of them had been produced, considered it exhaustively, head by head, and then, selecting a stamp in the very middle, pointed at it, and remarked with decision, "I will take that one"; and though, equally, I have read, heard, or been told of many of Lady Tree's epigrams in one place and another, such as when, being offered two kinds of fish at a dinner party, she remarked, "Ye cannot serve both Cod and Salmon," or when — another ichthvophagous bon mot — on a similar occasion haddock was handed to her, and she exclaimed joyously, "Buy 'Haddock,' and let slip the dogs of war," yet nothing can do justice to the captivating absurdity with which they both invested everyday life. Moreover, just as Sir Herbert's eminence on the stage a little overshadowed the exquisite virtuosity of Lady Tree's acting, so, erudite in many subjects as she was — in an earlier age she would have been a celebrated bluestocking — not enough attention has been paid to her talk. By her dazzling mastery of the pun, in some mouths so lumpish an accomplishment, she showed her great feeling for words, and the delight to be extracted from them. Wit, in-

deed, veined the whole substance of Lady Tree's life, and even during her last illness, at most a day or two before she died, when, realizing her extremity, she sent for her lawyer, in order to sign her will or add a codicil, she observed to those round her, when his name was announced, "My darlings, here comes my solicitor, to teach me my Death Duties."

6

AND this perhaps is the place to write of Lady Diana Manners, whose beauty and personality placed her alone in the English scene: the only beauty whose looks entitled her to be discussed by those who remembered the celebrated beauties of former days, the Comtesse de Castiglione and Georgina Lady Dudley, debating whether she should have been half an inch taller or shorter; in fact the only classic of her kind and generation. For this was not the era of the classic beauty: never before had the ugly woman enjoyed such a run for her ugliness as in these days, and after the war, the uglier, the more "amusing" her appearance was deemed to be; so that the great beauty, traditional in line, stood almost at a disadvantage. But fortunately for Lady Diana, though her looks belonged to all the English generations before her own, her spirit was essentially of the time, audacious, enterprising, and critical. I have heard it said about her — and about whom else could it justly be said? — that when she enters a room, it seems to grow lighter; and her eyes certainly hold an unusual refulgence, blue and gray.

The first time I dined at Lady Cunard's house in Cavendish Square, I sat next to Diana, and I remember her telling me in later years of her surprise at meeting a young officer of the Brigade of Guards who insisted on talking of Stravinsky.

There are many others, many, whom I should write about thus, but to the law of selection that governs the art of the writer I owe a higher allegiance, and in consequence, I must ask my friends of this period of my novitiate in life to forgive me for my omissions.

As if to make this life complete for me, I now fell in love for the first time since I had grown up. And this, the atmosphere of it, tinges all those years for me, and unites the various backgrounds with the same thread of gold. Under a staircase, at a dance — my liking for dancing had become a passion — I saw a young girl sitting, talking to her partner with a curious, distant, wide-eyed

solemnity, and the impression of her small golden head and small, childlike, rather expressionless face — eyes that were like a gap because of their light color, but full of appraisal and meaning — and of her long, slender neck, and long, delicate figure, as first I thus saw her, was with me for many years, so that, whenever I scribbled on a piece of paper without thinking, it was her face that, however clumsily, I drew. (Indeed, I recall my surprise when one day I was scribbling and my companion — it was in the trenches — saw what I had drawn, recognized the likeness, and said, "I know who that is!") As I had passed, her glance had rested on me — or so I like to think — and when we met, later that evening, we soon became friends. I was, indeed, fortunate that in the next few years she chose to give me so much of her time and company.

Though two years younger than myself — she was barely eighteen — she was not only extremely original in her point of view, but already most decided in character. She found herself as naturally at home in the modern world as I did: while, unlike me, she had enjoyed, and been clever enough to take advantage of, a superb education of the traditional kind. She accepted no ready-made way of thinking or feeling, was naturally a rebel — and, who can say, even perhaps, in spite of her love of pleasure, a saint — in her heart: and she possessed a natural comprehension of the esthetic standards of the day.

In no other period would young people have been allowed to see so much of each other, without interference by their elders. She and I, and a band of friends of the same age, used always to go about together, forming our own nucleus at every party. Besides frequenting the ballrooms of the rich, we would find our own amusements, going to dance at the White City or Earl's Court, visiting suburban music halls, theaters in the East End, and a music hall in Whitechapel where all the turns were fresh — if the term *fresh* can be used about them — from Cernăuți, and spoke only Yiddish. Thus we became lost in the strange proletarian cosmopolis of the twentieth century, the inexorable pattern of the future. Many miles of City, East End, and suburb we traversed in our walks at night.

For the following five years, I saw her, except when I was staying with my family or abroad, almost every day. I grew to know her every look, every way of expressing herself, every aspect of her character. To her, companion of my youth, I owe an inestimable amount of happiness and sorrow, of joy and regret.

(To be continued)

AN OPEN LETTER TO MR. BASIL O'CONNOR

Chairman, Central Committee, American Red Cross, Washington, D.C.

by ROBERT CUTLER

DEAR MR. O'CONNOR:—

In your address at the spring meeting of the National Social Welfare Assembly in New York City you charged that the raising of funds for the privately supported health, welfare, and social agencies in a community through the medium of a community chest or fund was "the communization of fund-raising" and that such federated fund-raising "spells the ruination of all private health and welfare activity."

The text of your address has now been published. So astonishing is its content and so responsible is the high position which you occupy in the American Red Cross that many Americans, like myself, have felt impelled to reappraise their basic beliefs about charitable undertakings in America in the light of these startling pronouncements.

It is not possible lightly to brush aside the views which you expressed. They were not casual or fortuitous. They were the main thesis of a serious, considered address made by you before a national meeting attended by representatives of the principal charitable associations in America. And the inevitable conclusion, in the absence of correction, is that you spoke as Chairman of the American Red Cross's Central Committee and as President of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. In fact, the context of your address indicates that you intended in it to set forth the philosophy of these two dramatic philanthropies.

That philosophy may be thus expressed: neither

Lawyer, soldier, and public servant, ROBERT CUTLER brings the head of the American Red Cross to the bar of public opinion for a questionable statement, which, if it passed unchallenged, would do incalculable harm to community chests the country over. Except for his years in the Army, Mr. Cutler, who is President of the Old Colony Trust Company, has taken part in all the Greater Boston Community Fund Campaigns, was the magnetic General Chairman in 1937, and National Chest President from 1939 to 1942. A veteran of both world wars, a recipient of the D.S.M. and the Legion of Merit, Corporation Counsel for the city of Boston from 1940 to 1942, he is first and last a loyal servant of his community.

the Red Cross nor the "March of Dimes" will participate with any other charity or association of charities in a joint appeal for funds. Each of these two national agencies insists, as a matter of policy, on its own separate appeal in each local community. The Red Cross and the "March of Dimes" typify what you call the "school of independent financing." The supporters of the many thousand local agencies that unite in community chests and funds throughout the United States and Canada comprise, in your terms, the "school of federated financing." Between these two schools you say there is irreconcilable conflict, which is soon "going to break out [into] open warfare."

The views which you have expressed are alien to me and, upon serious reconsideration, appear to me unsound and misleading. Their unfortunate misapprehension ought not to lie before our fellow countrymen without reply.

My sense of personal obligation to make such reply derives from the rich experiences which I have had as a volunteer in community fund work at local and national levels, and from my active interest as Treasurer of one of Boston's large, voluntarily supported hospitals, a Red Feather Agency.

But my principal qualification for this task is my deep conviction that the wholesome development throughout America during the last three decades of community chests and funds—"federated financing"—is a social phenomenon without parallel; one which has benefited our country in many practical and spiritual ways that are readily demonstrable, and one which is in essence a quite natural development of the democratic process in our free American society.

The community chest idea was born in Cleveland in 1913. In the thirty-four intervening years chests and councils have grown, year by year, until there are now about one thousand communities in the United States and Canada in which the private

social agencies have banded together in some form of federated fund-raising and social work planning. In the year 1945, these chests and funds raised for their local agencies and for the wartime agency appeals (other than Red Cross and Infantile Paralysis, of course) over \$220,000,000. Truly an astonishing and uniquely American accomplishment.

How did all this come about? Was it ordained from some Olympian height? Or did it sprout up from the grass roots?

If you will read the history of the growth of the chest movement in America, you will see that the development was wholly spontaneous. As a forest fire jumps from tree to tree, the flame passed from the people of one community to the people of another community. There was no fiat imposed from above upon any city or town or village. The inherent horse sense of the thing was its own passport. It appealed to the business acumen of the average American. The genius of our people is to appreciate and select reasonable, economical, and efficient methods of conducting their private enterprises. The growth of chests and funds in the forty-eight states has been a fine manifestation of this genius.

The unification of local appeals in a single voluntary campaign, with its ever widening participation in numbers of givers and workers, has made it possible more readily, more effectively, and with a finer spirit to raise the money necessary to carry on the local health, hospital, welfare, and social agencies which are vital to each community. During the depression years, the federated funds were able to maintain a higher level of contributions than were individual agencies. Thousands, tens of thousands, millions of people all over America learned to take an interest which they had never known before in the agencies that helped to stabilize the economic life of their home towns. As the clear judgment of men like Newton D. Baker and Gerard Swope prevailed, corporations likewise came to realize the benefit to them in the orderly support of the social agencies in the communities in which their employees worked and lived. And thus when the sudden horror of World War II broke upon America, there was in every community of consequential size a mechanism in instant readiness to grapple with and surmount the added and multifarious social burdens that are war's by-product at home.

If this kind of growth is not "the American way of life," — and you maintain it is not, — then my understanding of America is widely at variance with yours. To me, liberty is the right to serve in a good cause as a volunteer and not to be driven. Liberty is not to be confused with license, which is a horse of a very different color. Liberty is obedience

to law, working with your neighbor as a team, communion rather than solitary or patrician worship. Liberty never says. I will do it *my* way and everyone else in the neighborhood must take it and like it. No, in America we decide things in a town meeting. Democracy flowers at her best and is most productive when the people, informed of the facts and after consideration, make up their own minds and the will of the majority prevails.

My hospital is my most intimate concern in the field of charity, but the vitality and welfare of the privately supported agencies in Boston as an effectively functioning group are yet more important.

And so to me the American way of life has been magnificently exemplified in what has happened in so many great cities and little villages throughout our nation during these last thirty-four years. Each has decided for itself what *it* wants in regard to the support of its voluntary charitable agencies. Many citizens have had to subordinate their individual likes, prejudices, intellectual judgments to what has seemed to most citizens the better way. In Boston we came but lately (1936) to a central Fund. At the outset some very able and devoted leaders in our local life were skeptical and opposed. Joseph Lee and President Lowell then felt that Boston would lose more than it gained in adopting a fund organization. But the event has conclusively proved the wisdom of Charles Francis Adams and Cardinal O'Connell and Bishop Lawrence and the others who supported centralized fund-raising.

Above all, let me emphasize again that the validity of any community chest rests wholly upon the will of the people in that community. The free adoption by such a community of the chest and council method of raising and expending its charitable monies is not "communization," but the working of the American process.

It is beyond informed question that without the centralized system of fund-raising, countless local health, hospital, welfare, and social agencies in our cities and towns could not have been supported through the lean years but would have gone to the wall, with the result that their necessary functions would have been added to public expenditures and the light of voluntary charity to that extent would have dimmed in America. In the case of my own hospital, the continuing drain upon our unrestricted endowment funds to meet operating deficits in the care of the indigent sick would, without the Fund's support, have exhausted our resources and closed our doors. This instance could be multiplied, not hundreds but thousands of times, throughout the communities of America. Federation of fund-

raising, far from spelling "the ruination of all private health and welfare activity," has to the contrary been its salvation at the community level.

An even greater asset of joint fund-raising in the local community for the local services is the contribution made to the spirit of the people who work and give to the campaigns. Charity is no longer an exclusive preserve for the rich. Neither is it a hand-out. Today people more and more want to know what they are getting for their dollar. The comfortable, nice feeling of giving to the poor is not enough. The heart must underlie all real charity, true enough. But the head is an important partner of the hand. The support of our community agencies in full and vital operation is, to borrow Joseph Chamberlain's great description of social legislation, "the ransom which society pays for its security."

Twenty-five years ago the support of our social agencies in Boston was a patrician luxury, with some five hundred individuals making half of the total annual contribution. Today, almost forty thousand volunteers take part in the long preparation and the carrying forward of our Greater Boston campaigns, to which the leaders give literally months of their time. Some 400,000 individuals contributed to make up the \$6,450,000 Greater Boston raised in 1947 for its 300 Red Feather Agencies. Can there be a more stirring impulse in America? Thousands of our citizens are taking new and increased interest in charitable works and learning rich lessons in neighborliness. I venture to say that nothing in our three centuries and a quarter has done so much to bring the two million people of Greater Boston together, in friendship and in better understanding, as have its eleven Community Fund Campaigns.

Please do not mistake me. I do not attribute infallibility to the chest idea or its functioning. Of course, there are flaws, errors, and mistakes. Every enterprise undertaken by free men has them. That is, however, the underlying virtue of a democracy as opposed to a tyranny. In a democracy, there is always room for improvement. In a despotism, the despot is perfect and beyond critical reproach. In America we reject the Bourbon motto "*ne plus ultra*." For *we* know that there is always something better which can be done, if we will only try.

The only true rule to serve as our guide is that the people in each American community, as free men in a free society, shall have the right to decide how the money which they give to charity shall be raised and shared. It's *their* money and *they* work to raise it. Naturally, they think *their* voice should determine the amount of their goal and whether one campaign or many campaigns shall prevail.

An attempt by any particular group in a community to dictate with reference to the charitable undertakings of all the people in that community should be rejected, whether it be an industry, a labor organization, a religious denomination, a racial division, or whatever. The very heart of this matter is that *any* dictation is repugnant to the American ideal. Dictation in such a matter by *government* would be equally offensive. Dictation by a national agency, backed by government, would likewise be intolerable and should be struck down just as quickly.

Why should there be, as you insist, an inevitable battle between the "school of federated fund-raising" and the "school of individual fund-raising"? It isn't a seemly thing to fight about. More souls are saved through coöperation than conflict. My solution of any such issue remains that which as National Chest President I offered in 1941. *Leave it to the "little people" back home in each community to settle.* Can anything be more sound, more fair, or more American? Let's not have the decision come again from Olympus. I think we can safely abide by the good sense of the folks in their own home towns. After all, they *are* America.

You have made yourself nationally known by your labors in behalf of the Red Cross and Infantile Paralysis. These two fine endeavors are worthy of the great interest which the American people have shown in them, and you have been very successful in attracting that interest. But these two causes, with their enormous heart appeal (your address admits to the "over-dramatization" of one) and their good work, are only a little burden compared with the enormous load resting upon the "little people" in the local communities to continue the voluntary support of the hospitals, health, welfare, and other social agencies which are essential to decent and orderly living in their home towns.

There is all too little "drama" in many of these necessary works of love and devotion. Yet it would be intolerable if, because of lack of glamour, they should be elbowed into the shadows of inadequate financial support, while the coffers of a more dramatic appeal were filled and overflowing. We can't all be Marys. Some of us have to be Marthas in the kitchen. And Martha was a saint quite as much as Mary. Martha's backbreaking burden can be supported in these modern times only through the warmhearted and united efforts of the people back home doing the job in the manner which *they* decide is best for them.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT CUTLER

POEMS FOR THE AUTUMN

THE CORNER OF THE YEAR

by ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

HERE, at a pin's point, Summer ends;
The independent birds turn friends
All at once, they hush and eye
The long road of the open sky.

The high and hazy gentle trees
Discover a cruel growing breeze
In their branches, the trees quiver,
The skimming swallows have left the river.

Nothing is changed, yet everything
Is poised and taut, the crickets sing
Still in the grasses on and on;
But Summer the beautiful is gone.

Blue to the north is a sky so clear
It means the corner of the year
Has been turned, from now on all
Leaves and men face to the Fall.

Frost is but slender weeks away,
Tonight the sunset glow will stay,
Swing to the north and burn up higher
And northern lights wall earth with fire.

Nothing is lost yet, nothing broken,
And yet the cold blue word is spoken:
Say good-bye now to the sun,
The days of love and leaves are done.

SMALL CRICKET VANQUISHED

by JOHN ROLFE

HERE in the vaulting, vast, frost-stiffened
Forest of the grasses, underneath
The utter incomprehensibility of oak and elm,
Lie now, the gallant casque undone,
The brave cuirass, the bright, enameled, black
Jambeaux, the brassards, all
Loosed from their fine-spun rivets, dropped to rust.

Done the frenetic launchings into space, the brief,
Uncertain flights, the gear-encumbered, clumsy,
Chance-directed landings. Stringless the lute.
Silent the strident, gay, once-amorous song.

Sleep now,
Small knight-jongleur, inevitably in the Great List
Hors de combat. Accept the final prize.
With all that ever leapt and loved and sang
And fought brave, foolish battles at the feet
Of spanless shafts, embrace eternity.

Forest Waste

Our sawmills waste from 40 to 70 per cent of the forest tree. Were pulp mills, sawmills, and plants producing alcohol and plastics combined in an integrated industry, the whole tree could be made to yield such a variety of lumber, insulating boards, plastics, paints, and varnishes that our shortages in America would be wiped out and there would be surpluses for export. EGON GLESINGER is Chief of the Forest Productions Branch and Assistant Director of the Division of Forestry of the United Nations. This article is taken from his forthcoming book to be published by Simon and Schuster.

THE COMING AGE OF WOOD

by EGON GLESINGER

TO the public, plastics are as unpredictable a wonder as the lighted façade of the jukebox, itself made of plastics. This reputation is not wholly the product of press-agentry. Familiar as the substance of fountain pens and kewpie dolls, they turn up in bomber noses and auto finishes, toothbrush bristles and parachutes. They look like and do the work of stone, clay, metal, rubber, glass, and textile fibers. What all these plastics have in common is increasingly difficult to see. The word "plastics" is so loaded with meaning that it has begun to lose all meaning.

No longer adequate is the literal definition, from the Greek root, that plastics are "materials that can be shaped or molded." This is only part of the story. Plastics are materials that can be created by chemical process to perform specific functions. To be precise, the word "created" in this definition should be followed by the phrase "practically at will." Increasingly, through plastics, modern engineering is being freed from the need to trim and adjust its designs to the limitations of materials.

Wood is a natural plastic structure. Its cellulose fibers are complex plastic structures that possess great strength and resistance to fatigue. By the natural plastic lignin, these fibers are firmly bonded together and their strength is compounded in the unidirectional pattern of the grain. No synthetic process has yet been able to reproduce the oriented strength and resilience of wood as it grows in the tree. It is unlikely, therefore, that wooden beams will ever be replaced by plastic ones. Moreover, even if it were possible to endow, say, a plastic railroad tie with all the qualities of the wooden tie, the cost of such substitution would be prohibitive.

Theoretically, all that is needed to convert wood into a true plastic material is some means to overcome the limitations of its shape and size as it grows

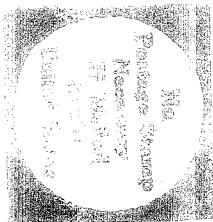
in the tree. This has already been accomplished. The various processes that gave birth to the new family of lignocellulose plastics are, for wood, the equivalent of the operation by which we reduce metals to liquids and then cast or roll them into desired shapes. As distinguished from the plastics that emerge from wood pulp, wood sugar, and lignin hydrogenation, the lignocellulose plastics look like wood, retain all of the constituents of wood intact, and can perform wood's natural function as a structural material. Meeting an extraordinary variety of architectural specifications at low cost, lignocellulose plastics will become one of the pillars supporting the new Age of Wood.

Lignocellulose plastics were produced and used on a large scale for some time before their real significance was understood. The plastics industry has only recently caught up with them. Long before wood itself became a plastic, however, wood was established as a major plastic raw material.

Celluloid, the first of all plastics, was made of wood. It was discovered by John Wesley Hyatt as the accidental and undesired result of his efforts to produce from wood pulp a substitute for ivory billiard balls. Cellulose is the base for 70 per cent of the high-grade plastics that sell at more than twenty cents a pound. From purified high-alpha cellulose come photographic film, cellophane, and the big family of cellulose acetate, nitrate, and ester plastics that go into many other products. And no list of plastics should omit rayon, even though its huge volume puts it in a class by itself. Plastics, of course, are made from an infinite variety of other materials, ranging from coal tar to the excrement of tropical insects. Yet, in one form or another, most of the products made from these plastics contain some wood.

Few people realize, for example, that 50 per cent

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of every such item as a steering wheel, telephone, or fountain pen is wood. Wood is the filler or base that reduces the cost of these products and extends the supply of the expensive synthetic resins used to make them. But, just as the cherries or the apples, rather than the dough, identify the pie, the resin gives the plastic its essential features and name.

Most wood-filled plastics are of the bakelite type, invented around 1910 by Leo Hendrick Baekeland. This group of plastics constitutes three fourths of all the plastics produced in the United States and holds first place in every other country where plastics are made. The resin used in these plastics is based on phenolformaldehyde or some other coal-tar synthetic. Usually supplied to the molds in the form of a dry powder, it becomes liquid when heated, flows like hot metal, and cools in the mold. With it flows its filler, wood flour. Obtained by grinding sawdust and screening it through a fine mesh, wood flour is cheap and readily available. Its crucial role in molded plastics is indicated by the fact that phenolic resins cost nearly fifty times as much as wood flour, which sells currently for about half a cent a pound.

Wood flour does no more than keep the price of plastics down. The most common complaint against wood flour plastics is that they are brittle and unable to stand much stress. It could not be otherwise, since all plastic resins are low-polymer materials, devoid of inherent strength; and grinding wood into flour destroys the fibers and the molecular chains that create its strength. Soybeans, cornstalks, and other materials tried as fillers show the same weakness, because all must be ground to make them flow, and the grinding destroys their strength. Ever since Henry Ford failed to make car bodies out of soybean plastics, science has concluded that wood flour and similar fillers are suited only for the production of gadgets requiring no particular strength.

Paper plastics

The alternative, to which the Ford Company and others turned, is to approximate the structure of wood by using the fibers intact instead of grinding them to powder. Wood fibers are readily available in paper. All that is required is to smear or impregnate sheets of paper with synthetic-resin glue, stack them until the desired thickness is obtained, and then cook the stack under pressure in a mold. To cut the cost, pulp sheets instead of paper can be used in the inner layers of the sandwich. Table tops, switchboards, and automobile dashboards have been made this way for years. The surface of such paper plastics can be given a natural glossy finish, it is impervious to cigarette burns and hard

liquor, and it can be cleaned with a damp cloth. But, because the fibers, already felted into paper, do not flow, as wood flour does, paper plastics do not lend themselves to the making of intricate shapes. Their strength, also, was limited until recently, because no one paid much attention to the quality of paper used.

The fairly obvious idea of increasing the strength of the plastic by increasing the strength of the paper got its first active attention in the light-metal crisis that threatened to tie up war production shortly after Pearl Harbor. Six months of research and experiment produced a number of specially designed, high-strength papers. Laminated and bonded with plastic, they have twice the strength and half the weight of aluminum. Papreg, as this new paper plastic is called, has a tensile strength of 36,000 pounds per square inch, compared to the 5000- to 10,000-pound strength of ordinary lumber and the 30,000- to 40,000-pound strength of mild steel.

Stronger than plywood, and more easily molded, Papreg found immediate application in aircraft construction and was widely used in wing tips, ailerons, fuselage assemblies, pontoons, and other non-stressed parts. To engineers it offers the possibility of achieving *monocoque* structures — that is, self-supporting, like an egg, requiring no bracing, and capable of being molded in one piece. Reconversion has brought Papreg into the manufacture of furniture, building panels, refrigerators, stoves, and, according to enthusiasts, automobiles and railway cars.

Light weight and high strength are not the only virtues of paper plastics. They resist flame, moisture, and vermin. With these qualities well established, paper has become a structural material that may one day require more pulp for the field of paper plastics alone than for all its present uses. Papreg may then come to be regarded as one of the outstanding inventions of World War II.

Lignin

In order to complete the picture, wood should logically contribute the resin as well as the fiber and filler of structural plastics. The word "resin," after all, once designated the sap of certain trees, even though most plastic resins today come from coal tar and petroleum. The natural source in the tree for such resins is lignin. Scientists know that lignin constitutes from 20 to 30 per cent of all wood, but they have yet to determine its exact chemical structure and properties.

Without lignin, trees could never grow several hundred feet tall, stand up against storms, and support heavy loads of snow. Binding together

parallel bundles of cellulose fibers, lignin acts as nature's plastic and gives wood its stiffness, impact strength, and resilience. Its action might be compared to that of the cement that surrounds and binds the iron rods in reinforced concrete. Nature itself thus suggests that we take lignin and use it as a binder for making cellulose plastics. Unfortunately, this is more easily said than done. For the lignin commercially available today refuses to duplicate its performance in nature.

The Marathon Paper Company, which spent a million dollars in lignin research and pioneered in the manufacture of synthetic vanillin, has made some progress. Lignin is used as the resin or resin extender in some of the paper and wood-flour plastics produced by this company. A few other United States forest-product enterprises have had similar tentative successes. Certain pulp and wood-sugar mills in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Sweden, it is reported, are producing fair lignin plastics on an industrial scale. At present, however, lignin plastics are unattractively dark in color, and their stability, strength, and moisture resistance leave much to be desired. They are, furthermore, a trial to the molder because they do not flow well, are sticky, and tend to gum up the molds.

Chemists are certain that none of these defects are inherent in lignin as it is synthesized in the tree. The trouble starts with the processes by which lignin is at present dissolved out of its bond with the cellulose fibers. At this point, reason suggests that lignin be left where it is in the natural structure of wood and be put to work in its pristine, natural condition. This is the eminently successful theory of lignocellulose plastics.

Synthetic vanillin is a perfect example of the high-grade products and prices lignin might yield. Obtained by treating waste sulphite liquors with an alkali, vanillin sells for \$3 a pound. Substantial profit within this price sweetens its flavor substantially — at least for the Marathon Paper Company, which manufactures it. One day's operation by United States sulphite pulp mills produces enough waste-liquor lignin to cover the nation's vanilla consumption for a full year. And since the remaining 2000 million human beings consume substantially less vanillin *in toto* than America's 140 million sweet-tooths, vanillin can never be more than a drop from the waste-liquor bucket.

Though it still has a long way to go, lignin's commercial career does not begin and end with vanillin. Wartime scarcity of other materials in Germany and Sweden, for example, brought about the use of considerable amounts of waste liquors in the manufacture of soap. The product did not make the

grade as bath or toilet soap, but it was completely satisfactory for laundry use and helped these nations to reduce their consumption of fats and oils in soap to one third.

Excellent qualities as a tanning agent have found lignin another market in the leather industry. Penetrating the cosmetics industry, lignin is an ingredient in some hand lotions and scalp tonics. It serves also in several well-known bactericides and fire extinguishers.

Advantage is taken of lignin's natural plastic properties by using it as a rubber extender, a road binder, and an admixture to phenolic resins. A concoction of lignin and concrete is the basis for a number of new building materials and panels.

A constituent of natural humus, the biggest single deficiency in agricultural soils, lignin shows great promise as a fertilizer. Enriched with elemental phosphorus and nitrogen, lignin promotes the formation of topsoil and thus might be used to extend farming to poor soils in heavily forested countries.

None of these applications express lignin's great potential value as a chemical raw material. This remains the objective of the research now moving forward in almost all forest-product laboratories.

A major and hopeful line of attack is the development of a process for the hydrogenation of lignin. Hydrogenation is the addition of hydrogen atoms to carbon compounds. Achieved by high temperatures and huge pressures, it results in profound and diverse changes in the structure, appearance, and properties of the chemical raw materials treated. Best known is the hydrogenation of coal, which supplied more than half of Nazi Germany's gasoline and lubricating oils during World War II. In the petroleum industry, hydrogenation is the essence of the various cracking processes used to extend the yield of gasolines from crude oil and to produce the superfuels of aviation.

Lignin hydrogenation has so far been conducted largely in the laboratory pressure bombs of the United States Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. It has produced yellow liquids of high viscosity that look and smell exactly like the basic fractions of crude oil. Fractionation and other chemical treatments of these liquids yield, first of all, a host of mysterious substances of no known immediate use but apparently great promise: phenols, the parent material for most thermo-setting or heat-resistant plastics; volatile as well as heavy lubricating oils; and finally, most important of all, the hydrocarbon mixture known as gasoline.

Gasoline and lubricating oils from lignin are still far away. How far away is best demonstrated by the fact that recent industrial development of

lignin has taken an entirely different course. It has led to the rise of a large industry engaged in making a variety of lignocellulose products — known by their less scientific name of “wood plastics” — in which the natural association of lignin and cellulose is maintained, but modified to meet a wide range of material specifications.

Lignin is justly regarded as the key to the future of wood chemistry. As long as wood-chemical industries are unable to process lignin to commercial advantage, their position in relation to coal and oil industries will remain that of the country butcher competing with the Chicago meat packer who exploits everything but the squeal. With the handicap of lignin as a by-product nuisance, it is remarkable that the wood-chemical industries — more correctly, the cellulose-converting industries — have not gone to the wall long ago. It is even more remarkable that wood pulp is highly profitable, that wood-sugar alcohol is fully competitive, and that other products of wood chemistry are making steady progress. The fact that, to date, lignin is almost a dead loss, however, has seriously hampered wood chemistry and kept its total turnover at about 20 million tons a year.

Masonite

One of the products of Thomas Alva Edison's wonder shop, the first lignocellulose plastic, was created by Owen Mason, an assistant to the master. Motivated, like Edison himself, by purely practical considerations, Mason was looking not for a new plastic, and still less for a solution to the problem of lignin, but simply for an industrial use for the millions of tons of excellent wood that America's sawmills consign to their waste burners. Only now, a quarter of a century later, is it becoming clear that Mason invented more than a fiberboard, that he invented a true plastic by an original chemical-engineering process.

The basis of Mason's invention is a gun loaded with sawdust or chips from almost any kind of wood waste. With the gun muzzle sealed, the waste-wood charge is subjected to a few seconds of high pressure. Sudden release of the pressure produces a violent internal explosion in the cell spaces of the wood, tearing the fibers apart and reactivating the lignin so that it can form a new bond with the fibers. The gun fiber stock, a brown fluffy mass, is then washed, screened, and spread on a board machine, where it is rolled, dried, and cut into panels from one inch to several inches thick.

The standard Masonite panel has about half the density of softwood lumber. Its open, fibrous structure makes it an excellent insulator against

heat, sound, and electricity. It is held together, not by the interlocking of cellulose fibers as in paper, nor by the addition of some extraneous plastic material, but by wood's own lignin, which fixes the fibers again in a remarkably strong, stable, and homogeneous bond.

Edison was too busy to devote much attention to his assistant's discovery. It did not take Mason long, however, to find a crop of aggressive capitalists who saw the commercial possibilities of his gun-explosion process. A factory site was acquired at Laurel, Mississippi, a town surrounded by large sawmills, and in the spring of 1924 the Masonite Corporation went into production, with Mason vice-president in charge of research.

Insulating materials were available long before Masonite was made, but the new wood fiberboards were so much better and cheaper that they swept the market. In insulating homes against the extremes of humidity and temperature, in sound-proofing movie theaters, in iceboxes, refrigerated railway cars, and telephone booths, Masonite found huge sales. But it was in making modern city buildings and skyscrapers inhabitable that Masonite and the art of insulation came into their own.

The bonanza struck by Masonite soon brought a group of eager enterprises into the field. With a little experiment they developed alternatives to the patented gun-explosion process and demonstrated that wood chips and sawdust were by no means the only materials for producing insulating board. Out of ordinary groundwood pulp, sugar cane, straw, and bagasse, they produced competitors as good and as profitable as Masonite. For a time, Celotex, Insulite, Treetex, and other brands of insulating material popped up like mushrooms, not only in the United States, but all over Europe as well. Some were sold not as panels but as fibrous fillers and wool-like sheets. To the public they offered the advantages of constantly falling prices and variety of choice to suit different conditions.

Masonite had touched off an important new industrial development, which opened up large new outlets for wood. The least enthusiastic member of the new industry, however, was the Masonite Corporation, which found itself selling a highly competitive product instead of the patented specialty it had banked on. At this point, its vice-president in charge of research began to report some interesting results from his continuing experiments. Gun fiber stock, he found, could be squeezed into a homogeneous, grainless, synthetic board with great hardness and water resistance. No one had ever succeeded in making a similar product before, and no wood fibers produced by any other process could

be made to organize and harden into quite such a superior board, no matter how they were squeezed. Clearly the gun-explosion process produced a unique effect upon the wood fibers. With some more thought and a little theorizing, Mason and his associates concluded that they had stumbled upon something revolutionary, a brand-new kind of plastic — a lignocellulose plastic. On the strength of this discovery, the Masonite Corporation took out, between 1926 and 1928, four exceptionally broad and shrewdly worded basic patents.

Hardboards

Masonite shifted its center of gravity from insulating boards to the new structural material. Produced in a wide range of densities, some even tough enough for floors and furniture, dark-brown Masonite boards have become a feature of the American landscape. Again the corporation found itself mobbed by competitors. This time, however, it had a patent case, and it went on the warpath. Masonite's competitors had more than lawyers to contend with. The unmatched excellence of its product and the pre-eminence of its name had equal effect in bringing them to terms. One by one, Celotex, Insulite, Johns-Manville, and all the other leading manufacturers of insulating materials signed a standard contract to confine themselves to manufacturing insulating panels, but selling synthetic hardboard for Masonite instead of making it.

Secure in its monopoly, Masonite expanded without fear. In fifteen years enough Masonite boards have been made to pave a four-foot sidewalk to the moon. In 1928 the factory at Laurel produced 150,000 square feet a day; its present capacity, with a plant that is one of the showplaces of United States industry, approaches 2 million square feet a day. With the local supply of sawmill waste insufficient, Masonite became a direct purchaser and consumer of pulpwood.

Continuing its aggressive research policy, Masonite has reinvested large portions of its considerable profits in further research, has built a splendid laboratory almost as big as its original factory, and maintains on its permanent payroll a staff of one hundred chemical engineers. Out of this investment in science has come not only constant increase in the quality and variety of its products, but some important insight into the reasons for Masonite's success. For when he squeezed his fiber into boards, Mason did not really know what made them so hard, nor did he have the full answer when he died in 1935. The discovery, since his death, that the explosion in the Masonite gun reactivates the lignin and gives it power, when squeezed, to rebound the

cellulose fibers has opened up a fundamental line of thought about the future of lignin.

Masonite engineers feel pretty certain that their explosion process embodies the long-sought formula for making lignin industrially useful. This claim is supported by the properties of Benaloid and Benalite, the two heaviest and densest Masonite products, named after Ben Alexander, the late founder-president of the company. These materials have been used to make die stock for stamping metals, and played a vital part in accelerating wartime aircraft production by eliminating the long and costly process of laying up and cutting steel dies. Other new products include all-Masonite iceboxes and fluorescent-light reflectors, plus a string of articles in which hard Masonite has replaced metals by virtue of its weight, strength, durability, and economy. The latest Masonite products not only are competitive with the best-known technical plastics, but also show considerably greater strength, resilience, and electrical resistance. Since practically no extraneous binders are used, Masonite engineers conclude that these virtues come from the highly superior qualities of lignin, especially lignin reactivated by the Masonite gun.

The wood that comes out of the Masonite process shows substantial improvement, in certain major respects, over its quality in the natural state. Although it is composed of the same constituents as wood in the trees, Masonite is homogeneous, free of defects, independent of the size of the tree, and can be produced in any given density. At its peak specific gravity of 1.4, it is three times heavier than ordinary pine. Balsa, the lightest, and lignum vitae, the heaviest, give natural wood a weight range of from 7 to 88 pounds per cubic foot. Masonite ranges from 1 to 90 pounds per cubic foot. Its density is varied, according to specification, by variation in the time and pressure of the explosion cycle and change in the mixture of its constituent softwoods and hardwoods, all of which are grown within a hundred-mile radius of Laurel. Very heavy or very light natural woods, by contrast, can be collected only at great expense from tropical forests.

Recent research has carried Masonite a step forward along another line into the lignin territory. Reactivated lignin has been separated from the gun fiber, mixed with furfural, a chemical recovered from the wash liquors of the explosion process, and made into a compound that yields fully molded plastics. Much research remains to be done before this laboratory development becomes an industrial process. But if Masonite's record means anything, there is good reason to expect that its researchers

may have succeeded in prying native lignin loose from its natural bonds. That this is better than a hunch is indicated by the fact that Masonite's hard-boiled management has placed major emphasis, in its post-war production and sales campaign, on lignocellulose plastics of high technical properties, molded into intricate shapes.

Into the public domain

Masonite will need such an advance to maintain its position, for the basic hardboard patents all expired during the war, and the gun-explosion process is now in the public domain. The Supreme Court has, furthermore, declared that the agreements between Masonite and its competitors violate the antitrust laws and has ordered them voided.

The consequences of these two events should be rapid and decisive. Masonite's monopoly has limited the annual consumption of synthetic hardboards in the United States to 220,000 tons — less than 2 per cent of United States lumber consumption and equivalent to not quite 4 pounds per person, compared to 25 pounds or 20 square feet per person in Sweden. It has also maintained sales prices of \$65 and more as against estimated production costs of \$25 per thousand square feet. Reduction of that profit margin and resulting increased sales will take synthetic hardboards out of the technical-specialty class and make them a major structural material.

Preparation for the day when lignocellulose plastics at last move into the public domain of competition has meanwhile been going forward in government and private laboratories outside of Masonite's walls of secrecy. The United States Forest Products Laboratory at Madison and others have developed commercially practical lignocellulose molding compounds that have already found industrial uses. These include a sizable item in the form of a competitor for hard rubber for use in storage-battery separators and cases.

An even more lively research ferment has been at work upon the problem of obtaining free lignin for use not only in lignocellulose compounds but also as an all-purpose plastic resin. A hydrofluoric-acid process has been developed which may do for wood sugar what the holocelluloseketene pulping process did for the wood-pulp industry. The test-tube product of the first experiments along this line is a white powder that shows the same lively reactivity exhibited by the ketene-derivative lignin.

Without question, the day is near when lignin will be available for use as a major raw material of industrial chemistry. When that day comes, lignin may increase the supply of plastics tremendously.

World output of plastics at present comes to about a million tons, to which may be added another one and one-half million tons of fiber board, both insulating and hard. The existing pulp industry and a wood-sugar industry that processed half the forest waste of Europe and North America could easily generate an annual supply of 40 million tons of lignin. If we assume, in accord with industrial practice, that lignin resins would constitute 50 per cent, by weight, of lignin plastics, end-product tonnage climbs to 80 million. Add the output of plastics from other sources indicated by the ascending curve of the industry, and the grand total reaches 100 million tons.

From $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 100 million tons of plastic is a big jump. Weight for weight, the 100-million-ton figure is equal to the present world output of lumber and amounts to about one third of the world consumption of metals. If we allow for the lighter weight of plastics, it easily matches the metals in actual volume.

To achieve this output, of course, we need a market equal in magnitude. The market, in turn, is a function of price. At two cents a pound, the generally assumed figure, lignin would knock the props from under the price structure of the plastics industry. It would undersell lumber, which starts at two cents in the rough and enters the market at six to ten cents a pound, and would easily outrun the light metals, which cost from eight to thirty cents in the ingot. Allowing for the weight factor again, lignin would even be competitive with standard auto body sheet steel, at its present six cents a pound. The potential size of the market for lignin is indicated by the fact that the United States auto industry could consume $3\frac{1}{2}$ million tons of lignin in plastic bodies alone.

The figures with which we have been playing indicate that world consumption of cheap plastics could place these twentieth-century materials on a tonnage basis equal to that of metals, wood, stone, and other survivors of earlier ages. It should also be remembered that plastics represent only one of two self-contained cycles that can make full chemical use of all the wood in the tree. The second is liquid motor fuel, which could lay equally unlimited demand upon the world supply of lignin. Supplementing each other, the two could set the forest industries operating at full blast and would permit an elastic adjustment of wood chemistry and forest utilization to world economic conditions. Via both cycles, lignin, the last missing link, will connect up the conveyor chains and pipelines that lead from the forests to the fuel tanks, aircraft plants, and house factories of tomorrow.



AN ATLANTIC STORY

THE DREAM DUST FACTORY

by WILLIAM LINDSAY GRESHAM

I DON'T know if you ever tried to crawl through a drainpipe sixteen inches square but if you never did, don't try it. Unless you're built slim like me. I had to take the chance because that pipe was the only way out of Coulterville Pen, and you see I had to get out or beat my brains against the bars like a bluejay I caught when I was a kid.

I started a tunnel under the floor of the paint shack and it took me six months before I got down twelve feet to the main pipe of the old prison building. I broke into it with a piece of iron sawed from a cot. Then I waited for a rainy day. If you're thinking about a crush-out, you want to wait for fog but rain will do. After the noon mess I started. With luck they wouldn't miss me before the count at quitting time.

There was some two hundred feet of pipe between me and Ross Creek and I wasn't sure there wouldn't be a grating over the pipe mouth. I had to take that chance.

In the dark I inched my way along, rapping the metal bar against the clammy sides of the pipe to scare any water snakes that might have holed up in there. Once something wriggled out from under my hand and I started to laugh and the laughter came booming and shrieking back at me in a sort of echo.

As a Jack-of-all-trades, WILLIAM LINDSAY GRESHAM had sampled a good deal of experience before his first manuscript was accepted. He was a clerk for a fire insurance company, editor of a number of magazines, a factory hand, a singer of folk ballads, a salesman of typewriters, a demonstrator of magic tricks, and a secretary in a private detective agency — all this before he volunteered to fight against Franco. After his recuperation from the Spanish War he wrote his first novel, *Nightmare Alley*, published by Rinehart & Company (1946).

Then I got to something I didn't know about — an elbow in the pipe. I stopped dragging myself along and began to cry. You see, there was no way back and if I got stuck I didn't think Warden Duffy would rip up half the prison yard just to keep me from starving to death in there. I figured he would just fill in the tunnel, when he found it, and fix up the books somehow to account for another inmate being dead.

Lying there, half inside the elbow, I could feel the muck squash under my chest. My eyes were burning with the slime, and the tears washed them clean and that was one on my side. You get to be grateful for little things like that.

I began to cuss my old man and think about my mother. He was my stepfather and I guess he meant all right but he had a high temper. It came back to me like a picture on a movie screen — Ma was in bed with a headache. She always had to have the blinds pulled down because the light hurt her. I was sitting in the kitchen reading. I was a big kid, going on seventeen. I'd done my chores so the old man hadn't no real kick coming; he just come in feeling mean.

The book I was reading was one of Ma's, called *Phantastes*, by a fellow named MacDonald. It was an old book with a green cover and the name in gold letters with a lot of curlicues. The back was pretty near off it, Ma and me had read it so much.

First thing I knew the book was snatched away from me and I saw the old man standing there. He was breathing hard through his nose. He didn't say a word, just took the book and with his other hand grabbed for the stove plate lifter.

I got burned some, reaching into the stove before he yanked me out and began giving me the open hand, first one side of my face and then the other. I was built light and I couldn't budge him. He cut my lip. It didn't amount to nothing but I knew right then and there what I was going to do.

That night late Ma came into my room, not making any noise. I made believe I was asleep. She bent down and kissed me and then she smoothed back my hair and I wanted to jump up and grab a hold of her but I didn't. I was planning to cut out of there, you see, and I knew if she talked to me I would never make it.

I waited until both of them were asleep and then I didn't leave no note or anything. I had a valentine some girl from school had stuck in our mailbox and I left it under my pillow where Ma would find it in the morning and then I was off. The sky had never seemed so full of stars and them so far away.

I heard a freight whistle up the line and I headed for it, cutting across fields in the dark and snagging my pants on barbed wire plenty but I didn't care. I had been on the go ever since — until I landed in Coulterville Pen.

When I stopped dreaming and had got some of my wind back I reached ahead of me in the dark and felt around as far as I could and then I found a ridge where the elbow fitted on to the pipe. I grabbed that little rim with my fingers and somehow, by digging with my toes to push from behind, I managed to worm my way through the elbow. And there, ahead of me, was a little gray spot of light.

I had to hurry because I knew one of the screws or a fink would find that tunnel under the paint shack and they'd have the prison siren blowing its brains out in no time. I inched along, the spot of light getting bigger all the time and my ears stopped ringing because the air was getting better, the closer I got to the pipe mouth.

Finally I reached out and grabbed the edges and pulled myself right out into the creek. It was muddy and roaring with the spring rains. I lay there in the shallows for a minute, letting the icy water wash the muck off me. Then somebody spoke from the bank over my head.

"Don't try to swim for it. We've got a launch out there waiting to pick you up." It was Warden Duffy's voice. "Wash that slime off you and then turn and face me. Drop that iron bar."

And that was that. I was so tired I hardly cared. There had been an old blueprint kicking around the prison population of that stir for years. It had been stolen from the record room probably before I was born. Nobody had ever tried a crush-out through that drain, though, and now nobody would ever

get another chance. That was all I thought about while they were taking me back.

I was marched down into the "hole" under the old prison and thrown into a cell. For a long time nobody showed up at all. No food and no water. The floor was studded with rivets and I couldn't sleep more than a few minutes at a time.

When they finally came for me it was Duffy and a couple of big screws who worked in the solitary block. Duffy started trying to find out where I had learned the layout of the drains and I had kind of a hard time not telling him. In the end they locked me up again and went away.

2

I BEGAN trying to dope out another way of beating the stir but I couldn't put my mind to it. My mouth was dry and I kept slipping into all kinds of crazy dreams for a while. It felt like they had turned on the heat down there and then suddenly it was ice-cold and I was shivering so I could hear my teeth rattle. Every now and then I would get a flash of memory — things that had happened to me long ago — and one kept coming back and back as if it was trying to tell me something.

It was the picture of a little valley I had discovered when I was a kid, a couple of ridges beyond our farm. I called it Happy Valley because when I first found it, it was the spring of the year with the trees all slow green and the crocuses coming up golden under them where there had once been a garden. It seemed like nobody could ever be anything but happy there.

It was a great place to run off to when things got kind of steamed up at home. I went back to it year after year. In winter you would think the whole world had been shut out, like as if a big cold frame had been dropped over the valley, when the sky was pressing down gray and close with more snow coming and it was so still you could hear your own heart working. Once I flushed a partridge there and the boom it made, shooting up out of the snow, sounded as loud as a cannon.

Well, a picture of this valley began coming back to me and I tried to hold on to it. After a while I didn't feel the rivets any more. "This is pretty good," I said to myself. "I'll just camp here for a while in the valley." And it worked fine for what I judged was a night and part of the next day.

Sometimes it was winter in the valley and sometimes it was summer. Then I let the year roll over it, quiet and slow, and watched the leaves come out and the grass get high and then the sky got a

deeper blue and the leaves turned and the valley was all gold and red with the fall of the year.

As I watched it, the first snow came and then more until it was all soft white and nothing breathing or moving except maybe an owl, out hunting when the night was settling down.

The next time they came for me and started asking questions about that drainpipe layout I was ready for them. I was determined to hang on to the valley as long as I could. They started to work me over and I hung on tight to the valley. I got so I could crawl right out of my skin and slide into one grass blade, standing there in the early summer light. I don't know how to tell it any better than that, what I did.

I could feel the strap fetch me a lick across my shoulders and I could feel something go off in the back of my head like a firecracker but there I was, safe and sound, inside the grass blade. It always had to be something little.

Once I slipped out of the grass and then it was tough for a while; I lost the valley and had nothing but the table top. When I lifted my head I saw that my lip had been bleeding in a little puddle. I had bit it without knowing.

I hoped they'd get tired soon and put me back into the cell because I didn't want to rat on the fellow who had given me that blueprint.

When they did get tired and I was safe back in the cell I just curled up and fell asleep. After that I got so I could shift in my sleep and give the rivets a fresh place to work on without waking up much.

The warden threatened to keep me down in the hole for the rest of my life but I stayed clammed up and in the end they took me out and gave me a hot shower and a shave and issued me clothes and I was taken over to Cell Block 9 which is the solitary block where they keep all the hard cases — the guys that get caught with shivs in their shoes and the guys that start fights. This was all right with me because I wasn't in any shape to work then anyhow and I didn't mind not having mail privileges — Ma was dead a few years back; nobody ever wrote to me except a couple of girls I had met in lunchrooms and that kind always get married and quit writing anyhow.

3

THE valley kept me busy a long time. But at last it sort of wore out and I began to get scared again until I thought of a pet bluejay I used to have. Not the one that beat his brains out but another one. This fellow I caught when he was young

and had fallen out of his nest. I kept him out in the barn and used to feed him scraps. He tamed up nice and would ride around on my shoulder and I called him Smarty because he was an awful sassy customer and used to talk back to me a lot while I petted him. In the end a cat caught him. She come bringing him into the house, proud as could be. But Ma took Smarty away from her and the two of us buried him out under an apple tree. Ma said, "He'll always be here, son. He's part of the tree, now. When the blossoms come out next spring you come out here and listen and I'll bet you'll hear him scolding away as the wind goes by." And that's the way it was, too.

So now I began to think about Smarty and it was just like the cat hadn't got him at all. I could sit on my bunk and make believe I had him with me, perched on my shoulder, and then I would send the make-believe down into my fingers until I could feel the soft feathers of his back. I recalled the way he'd stretch out one wing and fix his feathers with his beak and then hop down and look at me, first with one eye and then with the other. The way I saw him now his feathers were brighter blue than they had been for real. He would hop all around the cell and flutter between the bars and I could lean against them and see him flying back and forth and roosting on the bars of the windows across the cell block. Then I'd whistle real soft and he'd come back to me.

About that time Dreamy O'Donnell, an old trusty, was given a job helping out in the office where they keep the records of fellows that go stir-simple. One day the doctor sent for me and the screws took me to the office and the doc asked me a lot of questions. I wasn't sassy or anything but I kept thinking about the bluejay and smiling to myself because I could see him sitting on my shoulder, giving little soft pecks at my ear, and they couldn't.

Once when the doc was called to the phone the old man whispered to me, "Nice going, kid. You rode out the storm in fine shape. You're regular."

I just smiled at him. It seemed a long time ago — that business with the pipe and me getting the shellacking. It was O'Donnell that gave me the blueprint, you see — he was too old and worn out to use it himself. But I hadn't ratted on him.

The old man was still whispering out of the side of his mouth, "... says you're over the line. But I told him any kid that could go through that pipe was a long way from being stir bugs."

"I've got a bluejay," I told him, out of the side of my mouth. "He rides on my shoulder. Nobody can see him excepting me."

O'Donnell's face lit up. "No kidding! Say, kid, you've found it all by yourself — the only real way out of this stir. I gave up the crush-out ideas years ago. What you've been working is what cons call the Dream Dust Factory. Ain't nothing you can't have in stir, son, if you want it bad enough. You build it out of Dream Dust, inside your head. Only there's one thing you mustn't never make out of it . . ."

The doc came hustling back right then and I didn't learn what the old man was going to tell me only I didn't care much. I wanted to get back to my cell.

Outside of the windows across the cell block the summer days were getting shorter. The light on the wall across the courtyard looked different and the cell block smelled like autumn — fresh-painted steampipes.

In Cell Block 9 they didn't allow us magazines or papers but I didn't need any. I could see all the pictures I wanted right inside my head — built out of Dream Dust, like the old guy said.

After a while I got tired of the bluejay; he was always around and always pestering me to pet him. He would wake me up in the morning, pecking gently at the blanket over my face, and I would push him away and he would fly up to the cell bars and scold me for not getting up. I decided to fade him out but it took a long time until he was really gone.

4

BEFORE I knew it the winter was over and the air coming through the windows across the block smelled like spring. That's the toughest time in stir — when you can smell the spring. I began remembering girls I'd met on the road; not real road sisters, because they are pretty tough, but girls on farms where I had dinged the back door for a meal, and girls in hash joints. There was one girl I'd been so stuck on I got a job washing dishes for a couple of weeks but she started going out with a fellow who had a car.

But remembering her was what really started me working the Dream Dust Factory for fair. I wondered then why I had never thought of this one before. Maybe it was because I was scared of it — scared it wouldn't work and then I would be up the creek with nothing to hang on to.

I began building out of Dream Dust, over and over, shaping it up inside my head and trying to see what I had made. It got clearer and brighter and I could see it fine with my eyes shut but when I opened them it faded away. I didn't really think

it could happen to me and to work the Dream Dust Factory you've got to believe it can't fail.

Nights were the noisiest time in Cell Block 9 because that part of the prison population are restless sleepers, always having dreams and cussing or waking up yelling and bringing the night shift screw down to tell them to shut up.

But one night I was lying there in the dark, listening to the fellow in the next cell coughing. I was just dropping off when I heard a voice, clear as could be. It was a girl's voice, right down close to me, speaking low. I couldn't make out the words very clear, just part of one sentence: ". . . come to you. Don't worry." And with that I waited to see if there was any more. There wasn't but I turned over and went to sleep happy.

The first time I saw her was at night. There's something about night that makes it easier. She was just a shadow — that first time — between me and the bars of the cell front. I saw her first with my eyes shut and then when I opened them, real, real slow, I could see her shadow. She seemed to be wearing a pair of old denim pants, just like prison pants, but she had them rolled up above her knees and she had on a man's shirt that was too big for her, with the sleeves rolled up, and there in the dark I could only see her shadow but I thought her bare arms, as she stood with her hands in her pockets, were about the sweetest sight I ever saw in my life. Her hair was long; it hung to her shoulders, and even though I couldn't make out her face I knew she wasn't smiling. The tears started slipping out and down my face. She had come to me at last.

The next time I opened my eyes she was fading; I could see the bars through her. I knew that the Dream Dust takes a lot of time, but time was something I had. I had all the time in the world.

It's funny, in stir, how the days crawl by so slow and yet the months seem to go sailing over your head if you don't count them. I gave up thinking about the seasons outside. Where I was now it was mostly summer and out of Dream Dust I made trees — big ones, growing close, with their leaves meeting overhead; and in the dim light there was a little creek flowing over stones and in the willows were blackbirds nesting — there and in the rushes.

Sitting beside the stream on a smooth flat rock, I brought her back. I could hear the water over the stones, chuckling to itself. The wind came through, stirring the willows, and there, with my eyes wide open, I found the one I waited for. She parted the branches and stepped out on the rock and I saw her face, just as clear as could be.

She had a wide mouth that was red without having a lot of paint on it and her eyes were brown,

under the golden hair. She looked at me, smiling to herself, waiting for me to speak to her. I reached up and took her by the hand and drew her down on the rock beside me; her hand was warm and sweet and I held it in mine. Then I leaned over and her lips were firm and real. She had a modest way of kissing that went through me so I wanted to cry, and yet she didn't draw away from me, either.

"What's your name?" I whispered to her and she put her lips close to my ear and whispered back, "Vida."

It wasn't like I had given her a name. She told it to me, all by herself, and I knew that this was the Dream Dust all the way. I had a little Mex girl once down in El Paso who taught me some Spanish but all I remembered of it now was that "Vida" means "life."

Sometimes we sat on the rock under the willows, and sometimes it was a wide, white beach with the sun beating down and a cool wind sliding over us. Vida lay with her head on my arm, her eyes closed, feeling the sun warm us when the wind quit blowing every now and then. Her bathing suit was made of some kind of cloth I had never seen for real — the colors in it shifted and changed like in a sunset. She would turn and lean over me and let her hair fall down on each side of my face and it was like a little room with the light coming through it as she kissed me.

Whenever something would pull at me and bring me back to the cell in Block 9 I kept my temper and waited until I could get back to her and as time went on, getting back to her got easier and easier.

When the lights in the block went out at night she was always there; she would slip under the blankets and put her arms around me; feeling her hands on my back and shoulders was like satisfying a great hunger, somehow. And when I would wake up during the night she was still there, breathing slow and deep as she slept, and kissing her took a little while to wake her but then she would kiss back and maybe whisper something to me and it was all in the cell. But it was fine.

I could see the bars, dim in the light that filtered in from the windows across the way; I could feel the blankets that covered us, but Vida was there with me and I didn't ask for any more. She was life and I had found her and I never doubted that she would stick by me.

Sometimes when we couldn't sleep I'd change the cell with Dream Dust and it would be a boat out alone in the middle of a big river, all quiet under a million stars, and the new moon riding along with us, and a soft wind over the water. It was always

warm on the river and we would drop over the side and swim a little ways, Vida's hair darkening in the starlight when it was wet. I would swim after her and she would turn, treading water until I got close. Then we would be together and let the water close over our heads and we would kiss in the darkness, with the water all around us, until we had to let go and swim up for air.

In the boat were towels and dry clothes and Vida would press the water from her hair and tie one of the little towels around her head like a turban and we would drift again with the same blanket around us, warm and close and feeling the touch of the night wind cool on our lips after we had kissed and Vida's eyes were big and dark in the light of the new moon and all the summer stars. We would fall asleep in the boat, and when morning came I would hear the guard's whistle and kiss Vida and she would step out of the bunk and stand there, making a face toward the end of the block where the screw had sounded his whistle, and then she would blow me a kiss and walk past the head of the bunk. When I turned she would be gone. Then I pulled on my clothes, made up the bunk, and waited for the first formation and breakfast.

Once the fellow who marched on my right in the file came down sick and there was a blank file beside me as we marched to the mess hall. But halfway to it I felt someone next to me and there she was. She had on prison denims that were cut to fit her and her hair was caught up under her cap. She slid her hand into mine and I closed mine on her fingers, holding my hand so nobody would notice anything. That morning she sat beside me at the table and whispered to me all during breakfast, mostly little jokes about the screws up on the balcony of the mess hall. I couldn't keep from laughing a couple of times, quietly, to myself.

5

AND then, in the middle of all this — when I had everything a man could want in this world — I got sent for one morning to come to the warden's office. I thought he was still after that blueprint of the drains and I smiled to myself because if they took me down into the tank and worked me over I knew Vida would be there, holding my face between her hands while I got my licking, and I knew it would be all right.

The warden started to say something but I didn't pay much attention. I had better things to think about and I just smiled a little and then suddenly his voice cut through to me: —

"... this other fellow was picked up, pulling a gas station heist with the same *modus operandi* used in the case for which you were convicted. The resemblance is one of the most uncanny things I have ever seen . . ."

It didn't seem very important to me and I tried not to listen but he put two cards in front of me and I saw that they both had pictures of me. Only the fingerprints were different.

The room cleared and I picked up the cards and looked at them again. The warden went on, "... you'll probably sue the state for false arrest and imprisonment. If you're smart, you won't hold any grudges toward this institution or its administration. Let bygones be bygones. You'll get a good job out of it; I'll see to that. You're a bright lad. You'll be okay. No hard feelings, eh?"

I couldn't quite figure it. They gave me a suit and shoes and a full outfit, even a tie and an overcoat. It was spring and still cold in the evenings. The screws chipped in and gave me some dough and the warden doubled it. But it was all sour. Guys went about asking me questions and in the office of the prison psychiatrist the doc filled out a lot of forms, with Dreamy O'Donnell grinning over his shoulder at me. Then I was on the platform of a railroad station, holding a ticket. I didn't want to be there. I began to cry.

A train came along and I got on it and the screw told me it didn't go where this ticket said I was going which was the town where the job was. Only the screw wasn't a screw, he was the conductor.

I got off again and while I was waiting I walked out of the station and saw a bus and I got on it and paid the driver. But I didn't know where it was going. I wanted Vida to hurry back and tell me where we were, but she didn't come.

I got off the bus again and we were in a town and I saw a hotel and went in and they wanted me to pay in advance. It was all right by me. The clerk came running after me and handed me some change; I stuck it into my coat pocket without bothering to count it, I was in such a hurry to get to the room and be by myself. I started up the stairs, only the kid who had the key said we'd better take the elevator.

I wanted to be by myself and find Vida and then everything would be swell.

When I got in the room I drew down the shades so it would be nice and dark and peeled off my clothes and got into the bed, pulling up the sheet with blankets over it until it covered my face. Then I whispered to her, "Vida, Vida. Come on, darling." But nothing happened. I waited, listening to a big clock somewhere knock off the hours.

I stayed there in the bed until it was dark outside and then I got dressed and went out, looking at the lights in the stores. Once I thought I saw her but it was just one of these figures of girls they have in store windows, wearing a playsuit something like one I'd seen on Vida once. It wasn't Vida, even though I stood and stared at it, trying to throw enough Dream Dust around it to make it come alive. I knew if she came alive she could slip through the glass and come to me. Only I couldn't work it at all this time. I thought maybe it was because I was hungry.

I had coffee with cream and lots of sugar and then I had some more and the girl behind the counter kidded with me a little but I answered her with only half my mind. The rest was worrying about Vida and how I would find my way back to her.

6

I HAD this money they had given me and I lived on it until it was gone and then I found myself walking toward the freight yards. A string of empties was pulling out and I found a refrigerator car. My arms were weak, so weak I could hardly make the top. It wasn't sealed and I crawled down inside, hoping Vida might be in there. But she wasn't. After a lot of backing and jolting we were some place else and I climbed out and cut down a country road and hit a back door for a meal. I don't know what it was I ate or who gave it to me or whether I even thanked them for it.

But I looked around while I was heading toward the highway and I thought it looked familiar. It wasn't far from the old place — maybe fifty miles. Then I knew where I might find her — in Happy Valley. I started thumbing but nobody picked me up. And I couldn't walk much because my feet were soft and the shoes had begun to gall me.

There was a car parked in a side road; whoever left it there had forgotten to take the keys. I just wanted it for the short trip and I knew the state cops would find it as soon as I left it. I didn't think whoever had left it needed it as much as I did right then. It was the first time in my life I'd ever swiped anything and I wasn't going to sell it, you see. I just needed it to get to Happy Valley and Vida.

I let the clutch out too fast and nearly piled it up against a telephone pole but I got it going at last and then I rammed my foot down on the gas and let her fly. I knew what I had to do and that was to get to Happy Valley before dark and wait there for the light to fade. Then, I kept telling myself, she would come to me. I prayed to her to come to me

when the daylight was going and the valley shading over.

I stopped the car on the old timber road nearest the valley and set off straight up the side of the ridge, stopping to rest and get my breath every little while. I went as fast as I could, which wasn't very fast because I was out of condition. Finally I got to the top of the ridge.

The valley was gone.

That is, the Happy Valley I knew. It had been logged over; was nothing but stumps and spindly second growth. It looked dead and naked and I just stared at it for a long time. This was the end of the road, all right, because Vida would never come to me now, not in any place as empty and wide and ugly as this. I lay down and just about died. Only I didn't die. I just wanted to.

I went back to the car. The light was fading. But the night wasn't friendly any more. There was no place.

I thought I might as well take the car back again because I hadn't found Vida and it didn't matter now where I went once I took the car back, so I drove slow. There was a weight pressing on my shoulders and I felt like something was mashing me to death. I would start up and realize that I had driven a couple of miles in a dream, not remembering anything I had passed. I would find myself on the left-hand side of the road sometimes and wrench her over with a start.

I was almost there when I heard a siren behind me and I fed her the gas to try to get back in time — the state cops had spotted the license of the car and I wanted to get away from them. But they slid up alongside me. Then I saw the side road where the car had been and I turned left into it. Or I started to. That's all I remember.

There was a hospital and I was handcuffed to the bed. I heard talk — it seemed one of the cops who had been chasing me was dead in the same crash that knocked me out but I was too miserable to listen any more.

The jail wasn't like Coulterville. Besides, I had a broken collarbone. It kept aching under the cast and then itching and I couldn't fix my mind on anything.

The court didn't seem real, or the lawyers, or the judge — nothing seemed real. The train trip was all a dream. Until I saw the big gate of Coulterville Pen and I felt better because this was the place I had found her first and I could remember better here even if I couldn't ever find her again.

I was mugged and printed all over again and this time I got a new number.

In the shower I slid my hand up the concrete wall and it felt old and familiar and I began to slip back into life again, only the old things were gone from inside me and it was just a stir now and dead-looking everywhere I turned.

I pulled on the denims and jacket and a screw took me into the office of the prison psychiatrist. There I sat, waiting on a bench. There was a clock on the wall and I watched its hand jerk in little jumps for the minutes, thinking about Vida and wanting her again, and I shut my eyes because I felt tears coming.

Something touched my hand. I didn't want to open my eyes and have them see me crying right there. But the next thing I knew was the soft touch of her hair. Then her lips on mine. She whispered, "Cry now, before they come back," her arms going around me and pulling my head over to her breast. She was kneeling on the bench, holding me, when I heard the door rattle. Vida stepped down and just stood there with her arm around me.

I didn't care any more if they saw me holding on to her, I needed her so.

It was the old trusty, Dreamy O'Donnell. I gave Vida a little hug with the old man looking square at us. Or at me.

His face was sharp and sad, in spite of the little smile that was always stamped around his mouth. He came over and put his hand on my shoulder and said out of the side of his mouth, "Cold winter coming outside, kid. Eh? Don't you worry, kid. Stir ain't the worst place in the world. Not for us. Eh, kid?"

I just smiled at him again and Vida reached up and kissed my ear. I kept my arm around her, not caring right then if the old man saw me or if the doctor saw me or if anybody saw me do it. I had her back again; that was the big thing.

O'Donnell watched me with his sad old eyes. Finally he said, "I tried to tip you off, kid. There's one thing you shouldn't never make out of the Dream Dust — or you'll spend your life in stir."

The door was rattling again and I knew this time it would be the doctor so I took my arm from around Vida and she strolled over to the window to wait for me.

O'Donnell stood looking at me for a moment and then he whispered out of the side of his mouth, "Well, kid, you're over the line now. I only hope she treats you right."

Personnel

Vice President and Director of Inland Steel Company, CLARENCE B. RANDALL puts the problems of management squarely up to the young graduate. A large percentage of the veterans now coming out of our colleges are eager to work in personnel relations. Dealing with the employees of industry is a highly specialized job, and here, says Mr. Randall, are the key decisions which a young man must confront before he steps in to represent management in collective bargaining.

MANAGEMENT SPEAKS TO THE GRADUATE

by CLARENCE B. RANDALL

1

IN industry people are vastly more important than machines. We speak of this as the mechanical age, and are rightly proud of our engineering achievements, but the human problems are the ones which give to our industrial fabric the most severe test.

It is natural that the specialized job of dealing with the employees in industry should hold great attraction for students. On campuses all over the United States young men and women of promise seem eager to enter the field of industrial relations. In my college generation the attractive youngsters all tried to go into the bond business; twenty years later they went into advertising; but today in astonishing numbers they are eager to take on this significant and extraordinarily difficult responsibility.

I find great hope in what this may mean to industry fifteen years from now. As things stand today, the mature leaders in this field, whether on the management side or the labor side, have come to their responsibilities largely by accident. Occasionally in the labor unions you will now find men who were literally born into the labor movement and who from their earliest recollection hoped some day to be organizers and officers of a union. This is uncommon. Usually the labor leader is a man from the ranks to whom God gave the gift of speech. But rare as they are in the labor movement, men with special training are still more unusual on the management side. More often, both the man who formulates broad labor policy and the man who puts it into daily practice are fellows who just happened to be of the right age and availability when top management suddenly realized that this must become a specialized function. They were recruited from every phase of business.

It will be a great thing for the country when the leaders, both in the unions and among industrial executives, can be chosen from mature men who not

only possess special personal gifts for the work, but who have had also the benefit of the best training that higher education can provide. This leads to the question of what that training and education should be, and it is to this question that I address myself.

Above all else, I urge the young man who wishes to enter this important work to formulate at the outset a philosophy to govern his life. He must know what he believes, and then consciously plan each step of his personal development with strict fidelity to those principles.

If he decides to be a collectivist, that is his privilege. But let him do so honestly and openly. If he thinks that Communism will bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people, let him raise the red flag so that all may see. Such a decision, however, should automatically exclude him both from the management side and the trade-union side, and bar him from the field of industrial relations. His field should be politics, and his objective the destruction of the private capitalistic system.

If, however, he should decide, as I have done, that the free enterprise system and private management bring the largest measure of happiness to the greatest number of people, he must know why he thinks that. And thereafter he must scrupulously relate all his actions to the maintenance of that system. He must seek its preservation with the same tireless devotion with which the Communist seeks its destruction. All this will be true whether he selects management or the labor union as the field for his lifework, since only within free enterprise do honest labor unions survive.

The simple basic facts of economics must be his working tools. He must see clearly that wealth must be produced before it can be divided, and that the production of more goods and services is the only means by which the general standard of living can

be raised. He must see that effort is the counterpart to wages, and must never tolerate wages for services not performed. He must see the phrase "social gain" in its true perspective. He must recognize that in its best sense this means gain by all, and not the taking from some to give to others.

The next step in his reasoning will be to understand that the preservation of free enterprise requires private management. This means freedom for management to manage, freedom for unions to make their own decisions, and freedom for the two to disagree. The interruptions in production which strikes and lockouts bring are direct evidence of the continuing existence of freedom and of the private management system. To eliminate those interruptions by law is to suppress freedom. Each step toward government control is a step toward collectivism. Peace through mutual understanding and not peace by edict must be the goal.

The young student may agree with all of this and yet find it difficult to hew to the line in practice. For example, he may be confused as to the place that arbitration should have in industrial disputes. As a member of the general public, he will be annoyed by interruptions in production, particularly when the interruption occurs in an essential service that affects his daily life. His instinct will be to turn to government, and he will talk about fact-finding or a labor court, or some of the other plausible proposals by which an annoyed public seeks to bring the state back into the industrial scene. It takes insight and character at this point to apprehend that either forbidding a union to strike, or requiring management to arbitrate a substantive question, is in fact a denial of the private enterprise system. The concept of arbitration is one toward which every honest mind is attracted on first approaching the problem of industrial disputes, but it will prove grossly misleading unless we recognize that it may be employed for two sharply contrasted purposes, one proper and one improper.

The proper use of arbitration is for the settlement of differences regarding the correct interpretation of a written contract covering terms of employment. This is a simple question of honor. No employer should set himself up as the judge of whether he has made his own word good. He should submit such a dispute to a disinterested outsider.

The improper use of arbitration is equally clear. The differences between management and labor that cause paralyzing strikes are not usually questions of interpretation of agreements. They are basic differences in economic concepts. To submit such differences to arbitration is to abandon private management.

The executives chosen to run a modern business know more about its problems than anyone else. If they don't, they will be removed and those who have greater abilities will be put in their places. Those men know the market for the goods; they know the past history and the future expectancy of the company. If, in good faith, they believe that no further wage increase can be granted without injuring the business, their judgment must not be superseded by that of someone who is not present at the bargaining table. To do so is to retreat from the private enterprise system.

To put it in other words, either private individuals are to have freedom to make decisions, or that power is to rest in the state. There is no middle ground. The first is the enterprise system, the second collectivism, no matter by what other name these concepts may be called. Either our economy is a mosaic made up of a multiplicity of decisions by a great many people throughout the nation, or it is a monolith representing the sole judgment of the rulers. I happen still to believe that the wisdom of the many is superior to the wisdom of the few. I still prefer the interruptions that come from honest differences to the loss of the essential freedoms that follows absolutism in any form.

And those who champion the right of free workers to strike must likewise champion the right of free men in management to say no in the face of a strike. Freedom is not unilateral, but multilateral.

2

THE college senior may believe instinctively that all men are high-minded and honest — and, of course, they aren't. They certainly aren't on the management side. I should be the first to admit that.

And they certainly aren't on the union side. Many of my friends in the labor movement would admit that too. That there are Communists who control certain unions is a grim fact. There are men today in high offices in some of the unions who are there for no other purpose than to make all the trouble they can in industry. They do not believe in the enterprise system and would destroy the entire principle of private capitalism if they could. They are always able, adroit individuals, well schooled in their trade.

Competent education in the proper techniques of collective bargaining won't work with such men. They have no intention whatever of bargaining honestly. Their lives are a fraud and they can be dealt with in only one way. They must be met with

complete firmness on the part of management, and every effort must be made to expose their bad leadership to the public and to the workers involved. Such firmness and such effort at exposure will cause management frequently to be attacked by methods which only the stouthearted can endure, but such attacks must be endured for the sake of our American way of life.

There are other labor leaders who, while not Communists, become so accustomed to power that power becomes their creed. They make every decision in terms of power. Their attitudes, their policies, their actions, all flow from a sense of expediency as applied to the development of power for themselves and their associates. Quite often they are honest and agreeable individuals when encountered by themselves, but the very necessities of their life cause them constantly to seek more power. Such men are found at every level in the union hierarchy. At the beginning of his career the individual may be merely a grievance man in a department. He is ambitious to become a member of the executive committee of his local union, or perhaps an officer. He therefore creates incidents in his department in order to attract attention to himself. Each time he can score on his foreman, his career is advanced. When he becomes an officer, he gets the desire to become a district organizer; so, at the plant level, he arranges broader incidents. Guerrilla warfare of this sort obviously reduces the production of goods upon which the welfare of all the people depends.

At the top level in the international union the tool of this power is industry-wide bargaining. A man who can threaten the welfare of the entire nation by giving a signal that will stop every factory producing an essential item can usually bring management to its knees in short order. He possesses a power that should not exist in any one man or any group of men in a democracy. He is monopoly incarnate. Management is the fulcrum, but it is the public against whom the pressure is exerted. The public is always the victim of monopoly, and it is for that reason that monopoly wherever found must be outlawed in a democracy.

Where the demands of an international union are simultaneously presented in identical terms to several hundred employers, located in every section of the country, collective bargaining as it was contemplated by the Wagner Act disappears. The rights and privileges of a small group of workers employed in a single plant are lost sight of in the vast drama of power at the national level. No techniques which the young man has learned at the university about sound collective bargaining will

have any bearing when his plant is swept into the vortex of such titanic struggles. A factory in Bushville, Iowa, may have very real problems for men who work in Bushville, but what does a man in Pittsburgh know or care about them?

This nation-wide hysteria must be stopped if private management is to survive.

3

EVEN when genuine collective bargaining does occur at the local level, the young candidate may find some of his illusions shattered.

If he believes that force is still employed by management in so-called big business to break up unions, he is wrong. Stories of the Haymarket riot, Homestead, Memorial Day in Chicago, and other accounts of violence, which men on the labor side seem never willing to let pass into history, may have bred in his mind an apprehension that tear gas and rifles are still relied upon by reputable management. If isolated exceptions to peaceful negotiation occur anywhere in the country, I should be the first to deplore them.

That armed guards did sometimes form the background for industrial relations in the past, I recognize. I regret the history of that period. I also regret the Vigilantes of the frontier days in Texas and California. Obviously, maintenance of law and order must never rest in private hands, but must always be a function of government.

The college graduate, however, may not be prepared for the use of force that he finds on the labor side. He will be first saddened and then deeply angered at the use of physical violence to achieve labor's ends, and at the callousness with which it is practiced and defended by labor leaders. He has been taught to respect the law, and the sight of men swinging clubs and hurling stones at those seeking to go about the ordinary tasks of life will be abhorrent to him. Bloody heads and broken arms and the use of filthy epithets toward both men and women have not been part of his life, and he won't like it. Nor will he complacently accept anonymous threats to his wife on the telephone, or signs painted on the houses of those who think differently from the cowards who perpetrate the wrong. This is called militancy in the labor movement, but to the college graduate it is anarchy.

He may be greatly disillusioned at what he learns about democracy within the unions. The phrase "strike vote" carries in his mind a connotation of the Australian ballot and secrecy. He does not know that sometimes the strike vote means that the or-

ganizer stands up in front of the hall and says, "Let any — who doesn't want to strike stand up. We want to know who the management's stooges are." And he does not know that where ballots are used, there is commonly no poll list to prevent multiple voting, nor any safeguard to prevent ballot box stuffing.

He will learn that the average worker stays away from meetings to avoid trouble for himself. This, of course, is another form of the ordinary human apathy which causes citizens to stay away from the polls in governmental elections. It is the type of neglect of duty which makes it possible for corrupt gangs to establish political dominance over great cities. There is this distinction, however. In the labor unions the apathy seems to be a little more intensive, and it is often aggravated by fear of violence. The opportunity for aggressive individuals to seize power is a little more ready-made. It is common, for example, in a large industry to find a single local union that has 10,000 members. In such a union a meeting to which 400 men came would be large, and there will often be meetings attended by fewer than 100. This ratio of participation is far smaller than that which occurs in our cities even in bad election years.

He will be surprised to discover that men can belong to a local and be active in its administration who do not work at the plant in question. He may find that the speaker at the rally in the union hall, or the captain of the picket line, is a former employee who was discharged for cause. Even if the discharge were made the subject of a grievance, taken to arbitration, and sustained, the termination of employment and withdrawal from the certified unit does not bring about withdrawal from the union or from participation in its affairs. This puts an unusual twist into the very delicate problem of human relations. Here is a man motivated by revenge, whose sole purpose in continuing his membership in the union by paying dues is to do all that he can to make trouble between management and the workers. The college graduate will need all his training and self-control to remain poised in the face of such provocation.

On this question of the seizing of leadership by the aggressive few, it must be borne in mind that in the mass labor movements membership consists of men who have not been considered eligible for promotion into the junior supervisory ranks. In other words, the men who by temperament and native ability possess the natural quality of leadership are so eagerly sought by management that they quickly pass over into the foreman group and cease to be eligible for membership in the union.

Here again, our student might be surprised to find that it is quite common in the labor movement for men of great gifts and strong purposes to refuse to accept promotion to foremen in order that they may retain membership in the union and exercise the power which their natural aggressiveness has brought to them. It seems to me clear that a man who refuses promotion does not believe in the enterprise system under private management. His conduct justifies the inference that his objective in the labor movement is to embarrass management, reduce production, and prevent the perpetuation of the enterprise system. If that be true, the results of his leadership will not be social gains.

4

IF our young man should elect to seek employment on the management side, he will first have to go through the processes of learning the business. He cannot deal with human relations until he understands what products the company makes and what the men do who manufacture the products, working at the company's machines and in its plants. He cannot understand the attitude of a workingman until he understands the whole environment of the workingman. He will do this best by working himself, with his own hands. There is no substitute for learning things the hard way, and whoever tries to leap over that process and omit it from his personal experience is handicapping himself in his own future development. This means working day shift, night shift, or any other shift; it means proving his own mettle in every way.

Consider, for example, the man who carries the greatest responsibility at the principal steelmaking plant of my company. His childhood in New York certainly had not been altogether kind, and he was denied the advantages of the formal education which I received. High school plus one year in college had to suffice.

He arrived outside the gate of our plant at a time when we were unable to take on new men. By a stratagem which no one has ever forgotten, he eluded the watchman at the gate and got to the hiring office. His enterprise was rewarded by his being given a job as a day laborer in the scrap yard. He went to work willingly with his hands, and by sheer force of personality became turn foreman and then general foreman of the scrap yard. From there on his progress was sure and rapid. Night school gave him his technical training. He went next to foreman at the open hearth furnaces, thence to superintendent of open hearths, and thence to indus-

trial relations. The time cycle for all of that was nineteen years. During all of this time he was living in the same community with workingmen, and he has for the workers in our plant a depth of understanding and affection which no amount of academic education can provide.

Let us assume that eventually our candidate has a mature knowledge of the business and sound experience with the functioning of the labor relations program in his company. Now he is prepared to take his place at the bargaining table and represent management in the day to day and year to year relationships with the union that represents the workers. Now he will put into practice the theoretical understanding of human relations in which he has been trained.

A new phenomenon which will come to him as a severe shock, and which is almost completely unknown to the general public, is the experience called by insiders "bargaining by exhaustion." It will not be possible for our young man to do his job within the ordinary working hours, and thus maintain evenness of temper and balance of judgment in the way that his contemporaries who are in other phases of the business do. Young men working at top speed in purchasing, financing, or selling are urged by farsighted management to close their desks promptly at the end of the day and get some rest and relaxation. Everyone knows that a clear mind is necessary to the exercise of good judgment.

The man working at the bargaining table, however, finds himself these days skillfully and intentionally blocked from maintaining judgment and poise by the field tactics of trained union bargainers. They hope that at three in the morning, after eighteen hours of continuous session, locked up in a smoke-filled room, the management man will falter. They hope that then he will concede almost anything in order to get a contract signed or a grievance settled. They also know that the management man will hesitate to terminate the session for fear it will

be charged that he has committed an unfair labor practice by refusal to bargain. They reduce the strain for themselves in two ways: they work in relays, and they fill the passing hours with what in their hearts they know is play acting.

This phenomenon is not imagination. It is real, and if collective bargaining is to be raised to the high level in American industry that it merits, labor leaders must abandon this technique. It is unfair by any standard for them to delay all day in order to keep the management man at the table so far into the night that fatigue and utter physical exhaustion alter his clearness of mind and evenness of temper.

Such long nerve-racking sessions can, over a period of years, seriously affect the capacity for objective thinking in an executive. In spite of every good intention, he will tend to develop an attitude of hostility and belligerence. Nothing could be worse for harmonious relationships in industry than to have those animosities entering into the hearts of men. Here is where education and character count. A young man who has sought this as his life profession and trained himself for it will rise above that and never let it happen in his own life. He will never forget his interest in and affection for the individual worker. He will never let that man become a card in a file, or just a member of the union; he will always be a particular human being named Joe, who is honest, loyal, and who wants to give a full day of production for each day of pay.

Great forces are abroad in our social life, and great problems lie ahead which need solution. It is the essence of youth, however, to plunge into hard work with a light heart, and that is the spirit we now need. Universities themselves are making a great contribution. We recognize a growing sureness in their handling of this important subject. Being above the battle, they bring us moderation. The lubricant of their fresh approach reduces the friction of our relationships.





AN ATLANTIC "FIRST"

A Story

MIRACLE

by JUNE WEST

THE sisters shared a bed and whispered violently in the sticky night. Virginia said, "He was dreadful today. Especially to you."

Angela sighed. "It doesn't matter." But it did. It mattered terribly. She kicked the sheet off and shoved it onto the floor with her bare feet. Then she lay back in bed and hated her grandfather.

A thick layer of almost unbreathable heat hung heavy, hung limp, hung sodden and flatulent, draped over the Baptist parsonage like an endless mosquito netting from which escape is forever impossible, as in a nightmare.

Only Grandpapa was asleep, insulated by his ninety years, his partial deafness, and the quality of his own legend. Under his huge white beard he breathed hard, dreaming as always of Hell.

The Reverend Mr. Stanfield, his invalid wife, and his two daughters lay awake and waited. They left the hall doors open in the futile hope of a breeze and listened to each other sighing and turning. The clock in front of the King Undertaking Parlors next door struck twelve and went on unctuously ticking off the minutes that were left before your turn came too. ("And had you made proper arrangements?") The parsonage was squeezed back between the mortuary and the Baptist Church and nobody who lived there ever forgot for very long about ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

Only Grandpapa could sleep. He himself had re-

A graduate of the University of Colorado, where she is the wife of a professor, JUNE WEST spent her childhood in Tennessee and Alabama, and a year in a Mexican mining camp. For two years she has been Instructor in English at the University of Colorado, and as a pastime for this summer, she acted with a professional stock company in Estes Park, Colorado.

tired from the ministry twenty years ago. The rest of them waited in the dark, steeping in perspiration. Angela was not sure what they waited for. Some merely for sleep; some, like herself, for a miracle. Just any miracle. It was slow coming. She would be seventeen next week.

It had been an unbearable day, a muggy, soggy Sunday, with Grandpapa bullying and tormenting the whole family, and — Well, there was no use thinking about that.

Something had to happen. It was that kind of night. Chartreuse heat lightning throbbed in a barren sky. Dry thunder careened, restless, among the moving planets. Angela caught her breath. The sky was electric with suspense. Something wonderful was waiting up there, something that meant something. If only everybody in the house would look up and hold his breath at the same time — if she could make them really listen — then this miracle would stalk lonely down the interstellar tunnels and take shape before them — in just a second — *now!*

"Ahh! Satan!" Grandpapa rolled over in his bed and groaned loudly in his sleep, dreaming pleasantly of everlasting fires. "There will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!" The deaf old preacher's practiced voice crashed on the ears of his sleepless descendants.

"Here we go again!" muttered Virginia.

Angela's miracle shuddered and fled. This, after all, was not the night for mystic unveilings. Just another night for listening to Grandpapa's sermons in his sleep. He had not preached in the pulpit since his retirement, and he missed it.

"Beware!" he rejoiced. "The fearful time is upon you."

"Oh, Lord!" moaned Daddy from his room at the end of the hall, and he did not sound like a preacher when he said it. But then he never did sound like a preacher, not like Grandpapa. He objected to the very word *preacher*, preferring *minister* or, at worst, *parson*. He believed in partial rather than total immersion. Grandpapa always said that was like believing in partial rather than total salvation and he didn't know what the world was coming to. He did, though. It was coming to Hell.

"The everlasting flames are roaring, they leap higher every moment." This was his favorite sermon, reserved for the hottest nights of all. In winter when the pipes froze he explained that Hell was made of ice.

"Oh, Lord." Daddy bumped over in bed. A slat fell out and clattered on the bare floor. Virginia giggled. Daddy yelled, "Simmer down! Simmer down!"

Angela sighed. Nothing was ever going to happen, in the sky, or in this house, or to her, ever, except that she would have to go on listening to Grandpapa's brimstone oratory as long as she lived. He would go on ruling the parsonage and making everybody miserable forever and maybe after that. He was immortal. Heaven had rejected him and he had rejected Hell. It was a stalemate.

Sundays were always bad. Today he had scolded Mother like a child for having such a severe chill that she could not go to church. He sent fourteen-year-old Virginia weeping home from Sunday school because she had worn a gold bracelet; jewelry on the Sabbath was immoral. In church he scoffed out loud through Daddy's sermon until the congregation tittered and Daddy plunged into the benediction half an hour too soon. But the worst had come when he had learned that Angela wanted to go to the High School Graduation Dance tomorrow.

Preachers' daughters never went to dances. But this was different. She was graduating, second in the class. The Class President had asked her to lead the Promenade with him. She had saved her tiny allowance to buy pink organdy for her first party dress, and had sewed it herself, in secret. She had done the hem over five times but it still wobbled. This afternoon, though, when she put it on to surprise Daddy, her eyes had been so bright and eager in her thin face that the hem had not mattered. Daddy had stared at her so proudly that for the first time she thought, "Maybe I'm going to be pretty!"

Daddy had not said she might go, but he had listened. Virginia had helped her beg and coax. Mother had got out of bed, pale and unsteady, to urge him, "It's only a little dance." At last he had smiled at Angela and said, "But you don't know how to dance."

"I could learn!" she had answered, springing up. She had lifted her arms into dancing position and begun to whirl and whirl, faster and faster. "See? This is a waltz!"

"No, no!" Mother had cried. "It goes like this." She had wrapped her kimono about her and stood up, eyes suddenly shining, chill forgotten, while her daughters stared. She had clapped her hands in accompaniment and swayed as she moved. "Step, slide, slide. Step, slide, slide. I remember!"

Daddy had looked into her eyes strangely and said, "So do I." Angela had never heard his voice so uneven. "So do I."

2

THAT was when Grandpapa had stalked in, tall and bald and bad-tempered. He had flashed his eyes, cleared his famous throat, and settled himself inside the sanctuary of his beard, hurling epithets viciously. Carnal knowledge. Lascivious women. Degenerate generation. "Besides," he had ended, "only riffraff run around on the streets at night. Half naked." He had tugged contemptuously at her pink dress, which had no sleeves — tugged so hard that the organdy tore sharply across the waist.

Angela had managed not to cry.

Daddy had said, "How about a little picnic tomorrow, instead of the dance?" and had picked up a book, trying not to look at Mother.

Everybody was unhappy now, except Grandpapa. At the head of each bed hung a queasy rag, soaked in turpentine, dripping oil onto the sweat-damp pillows. The smell was hardly endurable, but it kept the mosquitoes away for a little while.

"Look out! Behind you, in the shadow! See his scaly face, smell his poisonous breath."

Angela turned over too quickly. There was a loud rip and a tug at her nightgown. Virginia giggled. Angela flared, "I wish I didn't have to be pinned onto you!"

"Well, it's no fun for me, I can tell you." Virginia sat up and removed the huge safety pin that held their cotton gowns together. Virginia sometimes walked in her sleep. Now they pinned her gown to Angela's so that Angela could wake up whenever she moved and pull her back into bed.

"Ah-hanh!" gloated Grandpapa. "You're thirsty

now, O careless Sinner, but there is no drink in the Great Pit." He was sometimes left out of the conversation in the day but the nights belonged to him, and he knew it. He was always at his best when the doors had to be left open. Tonight was made for him.

Everybody was always going around telling about what a powerful evangelist he used to be, with his enormous black beard, and how grown men had sobbed and little children shrieked and there always had to be a doctor at the tent meetings to take care of the ones who had fits.

And his wives. Sometimes it was said he had four, all dead, and sometimes five, still dead. When you asked him he talked about the Devil and got deafer than ever. If you asked Daddy, who was the tenth son, he was pretty sure he remembered at least two stepmothers in his boyhood, one fat and one thin, but both weepy as long as they lasted. Like Mother now.

He had had the beard as long as anybody could remember. He combed it twice a day. Sometimes he put brilliantine on it. It was the most beautiful beard in Tennessee. It hung to his waist and spread across his shoulders; it was his shining armor. The whole family was secretly proud of it. Even Angela could not help knowing how he impressed the little town. Other girls might go to dances, but no one had an ancestor like that. She took her turn meekly at the ceremonial washing of Grandpapa's beard once a week, and never forgot to put bluing in the rinse water.

"You cannot swallow," he shouted now. "No, Sir Drunkard, your throat is sealed, your tongue is swollen. . . ."

Mother was getting up slowly in the next room and trailing the sheets on the floor. She was going to take the sheets downstairs and wring them out in the cold water that dripped into the rusty dishpan under the icebox. The sheets left sepia streaks on you that showed up like blood in the dawn, but Mother insisted that it helped a little. She padded dimly into the doorway, her hair courageously screwed up in kid-leather curlers, one hand clutching the short skimpy skirt of her nightgown as if it were a train. She should have had one for ballast. She said, "Angela, I'm sorry about the dance. Maybe something will happen. I'll try to think of something."

"No water in Hell!" cried the old preacher, full of breath.

What if he wasn't asleep?

Mother's voice sagged sweetly. "It's hard to think in this heat." She wavered on her uneven path to the kitchen, sheets dragging eerily.

A sound of splashing and then of muttering came from Daddy's room. He had tried to pour a glass of water from the pitcher on his table and had spilled it in the dark. "Mrs. Stanfield!" he shouted to Mother downstairs. "Will you bring me a glass of water?" Mother being Mother, you could not tell whether she heard or not. He moaned, enunciating distinctly, "Just a lit-tle glass of wat-er from the faucet. Just — let — it — run." Someone was supposed to ask him what the matter was. No one spoke.

Maybe he would say something about the dance.

Angela got up and took him a glass of water from the bathroom. He did not mention the dance. She sighed. Life was a constant struggle to get your way agreeably from older people on whom you were dependent, without giving yourself away. Daddy and Mother were quite nice parents, better than lots, but if you really told them anything they took advantage of it. If she should tell Daddy how she felt about the sky tonight, with the thunder serenading the stars, and Something going to happen, he would talk to her about God (assuring her all the time that he was not talking as a minister), or he would insist that he had been through the same thing himself. She did not want him to have been through the same thing. He would make a Lasting Tie of it. She did not want any ties that would have to be acknowledged when she was in another mood.

Mother padded upstairs. The sheets rustled wetly and squeaked with a faint silken sound. Angela thought that if she ever got old and became a ghost she too would haunt the hallways shrouded in wet cotton and rusty ice water, looking reproachful but never saying why. Not that Mother needed to say why. That Mrs. Hunt sitting in the choir staring at Daddy. And Daddy, who had never wanted to be a preacher, looking at her from the pulpit and saying right out loud that Hell was in the mind. Angela wondered if Grandpapa knew. He was not blind. Only deaf.

It was a shame Grandpapa could not hear himself. "He is going to grab you! Closer, Closer, CLOSER. . . ."

3

A JAGGED sound shrieked out of the sky and split the darkness. It shot straight toward all human sanity, obliterating everything but the roaring in Angela's ears. She shot out of bed and landed standing up. Was this what had lurked behind the stars, waiting? The end of the world? Somebody screamed. Herself? Then, sickeningly, nothing. A silence was born, grew up, languished, and died.

Then came an earthly sound, not mysterious now, but still a sound of terror. The fire siren! It was the Devil loose on the night, and the Devil was an idiot, snuffling and gibbering and howling.

Angela raced Virginia to the window. They stood with arms around each other, quivering. Flames seared the darkness. The fire was close. Across the street and in the next block a building showed clearly, outlined by the glow of flames. The building was set back from the street, cater-cornered from the parsonage. Angela could see most of it through the trees. Virginia was shuddering. "Don't be afraid," said Angela. She wanted to run, to scream, to hide under the bed and never come out. Lights went on in near-by houses. Doors slammed. Voices called, tense and awed. There was another sound, too, a shrill squealing, not the siren, something more horrible yet, that could be heard when the siren slacked.

Daddy and Mother came in to watch from the window. Angela's terror increased when she saw that Mother breathed quickly and that Daddy's face was white. She said, "There's a funny sort of sound —"

They listened and stared back at her, shocked.

A man ran past in the street below. He shouted, "Thompson's barn!"

That was the sound then. The horses, inside.

"Can the sparks come over here?" asked Virginia.

"Where's Grandpapa?"

"Let him sleep. He must be very tired not to hear this," Mother said.

Daddy agreed. "First time I ever knew him to miss a fire. He's getting deafer."

The fire engine clanged up the street. Crowds of people appeared, running and panting. One woman carried her baby and the baby screamed, over and over.

It was better when the siren stopped. Panic subsided. There was reassurance in the sound of pumps and hissing hoses. The firemen moved quickly. A man shouted, "They're getting the horses out!" There was a cheer from the crowd that brought tears of excitement and relief to Angela's eyes.

"May we go?" she cried.

"Yes," said Daddy. "Or rather — no. That's only ruffraff down there." All he needed was a beard.

It was a wonderful fire. The first good one since the courthouse burned two years ago, the first real community event in months, unless you counted church meetings. The whole town was awake, and grateful now that the hysteria was over. The barn could not be saved. The flames flamed and the smoke smoked and the firemen struggled heroically

with the writhing hoses. The best of all was when the roof caved in with a great crash, and the crowd backed away, screaming. Sparks shot up high enough to merge for an instant with the churning sky. Angela thought, "I knew something was going to happen!"

But it was over too soon. Rapidly the color faded and the noise died. Only damp smoke was left. The crowd shuffled listlessly home, yawning, to stuffy rooms and the smell of turpentine at the head of their beds. Lights went out like hopes. Doors slammed. The long summer boredom settled in again.

Angela sat in the window alone after the others went to bed. She tried to choke down disappointment. What had she expected? That the whole town would burn down?

4

FAR away a steamboat whistled, muffled and mournful and unbelieving. The water moccasins would be swimming contentedly in the green swamp scum that lined the railroad tracks. In the ditches the fireflies glowed, faded, glowed, as carefully as if they meant something. Angela blinked resentfully at the mocking sky.

Then she heard the men, a little group of them, talking and laughing in the street. They were arguing, too, and leading — no, pulling — somebody with them. She leaned out of the window as far as she could. The somebody seemed to be pulling back and protesting. Maybe it was a fight!

A familiar voice clanged in the dark, proclaiming, "Children of the Flame! You cannot quench the fires of Hell!"

"Where's Grandpapa?" She fled across to his room. It was empty. "He must have gone down the back stairs while we were at the window."

The others were all up now, pulling on robes and hurrying down the steps behind her.

Three firemen brought him to the front door. "He's not hurt," they said. "He's lucky."

Angela could not tell, at first, what made him look so queer, standing reluctantly in the door and glaring about him so wearily. He had pulled his Prince Albert coat on over his pajamas and stuck his wrinkled feet sockless into his shoes, but that was not what made him look so tarnished.

The firemen tried not to grin. "Just got a mite too close to the fire and scorched his beard, that's all." They touched him on the back as if he were just any old man.

His descendants stared in horror, and he stared

back sheepishly — a begrimed and singed old ram. The magnificent fleece was ruined forever — browned and seared and crinkled. Only the firemen had the heart to speak. "He'll be all right. But that beard is a mess. Always reckoned he was goin' to get too close some time. Old man never could stay away from a fire."

"Yep. Sure does love a fire."

They did not laugh until they were in the street.

It was as if all the family portraits had been defiled.

They pulled themselves together. They sat him down in the kitchen, washed, brushed, fed him. They vaselined his face in case it was scorched. The smell of burnt hair was sickening. No one spoke. They waited for his smoldering wrath. But he was quiet. He only humped over in his chair and muttered a little and then yawned loudly. He just sat there. It was embarrassing.

Mother faced truth first. "Bring me the scissors, Angela."

They argued, but they knew she was right. When she set to work, Daddy turned his head. Virginia covered her face. Mother made strong, ruthless sweeps straight across. She cut it short. She snipped and clipped until the famous beard was only a stubble on an ancient chin. Ugly hunks of scorched hair littered the floor.

When it was all over, the little old man with the thin neck ran his hand over his face as if surprised to find he had one. He fumbled over his chest where the beard used to rest. "Shorn," he mourned. "Shorn, like an old bellwether."

For the first time in her life Angela put her arm around his shoulders. She even patted his cheek. "Maybe it will grow out again." But she knew it wouldn't.

"Fleeced." Two tears stumbled down his screwed-up cheeks. "Bespooled. Ravished."

"But you look so handsome, Grandpapa." Angela ran for a mirror.

That was a mistake. He stared at the mirror in dismay, as at an enemy. He straightened up belligerently and turned himself with difficulty to glare up at Mother. He ground the word out. "Delilah!"

Mother gasped and flushed, but she looked straight into his eyes for a long moment. Then she put the scissors down sharply and walked out. Her step was quick, sure.

By the time they were all in bed again, a tiny

breeze shuffled along the floors. Angela listened to the slow separate breathings of her family sliding off into sleep, and loved them all, especially poor little Grandpapa.

"Ah hannah, Satan!" The brassy voice came out as loud as ever. It clattered through the house and instantly they were all awake.

"Quiet, old man, quiet!" groaned Daddy without hope.

It was beginning again. Mother sighed. Angela ground her teeth and wondered if she could sleep with a pillow over her head. This was too much, it really was.

"Lord," said Grandpapa, "Lord — the truth is —"

Angela lifted her head quickly. There was a new note in his voice, a matter-of-factness. A relaxation. "The truth is —" he said calmly, "it's a lot cooler this way."

There was a long silence. Then a thing happened which was not a usual thing. It was that Mother began to laugh. She said, "It's a lot cooler this way," and she laughed and the sound was so sheer and so rare that her daughters sat up, not believing what they heard, and wanting it to go on forever. It was as if the earth and the air had reached an impasse, and neither one would give in, but they strove against each other, blinded with heat, and no hope of surcease, and then suddenly a fragrant silver rain had blown across the world and you could taste on your tongue the smell of new-washed dust.

"Oh, maybe she's getting well," breathed Virginia, and she laughed, and Angela, too, and the sound flashed and glinted like quicksilver in the parsonage.

"Simmer down, you females!" called Daddy, but it sounded like a cheer.

When they had simmered down, sleep came quickly to the others. Not to Angela. She would have to hurry. She listened until she was sure they were asleep. She got up very quietly and stood in the middle of the floor a moment, concentrating. She wanted to get it just right. Then she lifted her arms into dancing position, and began to sway. "Step, slide, slide. Step, slide, slide. Step, slide, slide —"

She hummed the first tune that came to her mind. It did not matter that the tune happened to be "Lead, Kindly Light."

Eel-ectricity

After a somewhat restless youth, CHRISTOPHER W. COATES landed a job in the old New York Aquarium at Battery Park, was put in charge of the fresh-water tropical fish, and for the first time felt the jolt of the electric eel. Today, as Curator-Aquarist of the New York Aquarium, he is intimately involved in the behavior of fish. In the planning of the New York Aquarium, he is confronted with the problem of how to build tanks holding several million gallons of forty different kinds of water and how to move thousands of gallons a minute without letting any metal touch the fish.

THE KICK OF AN ELECTRIC EEL

by CHRISTOPHER W. COATES

I

THERE are so-called lower creatures on earth today which can accomplish electrical feats beyond those of our most advanced laboratories. These living dynamos are all fishes and they hail from Africa, South America, and the temperate and tropical seas. How long they have been electrocuting their enemies and prey is unknown, but fossil fishes from deposits laid down over a hundred million years ago have organs so similar to the electric ones of living forms that there is no doubt they, too, possessed electric powers.

Of all the electric fishes, the best known, both by scientists and by laymen, is the electric eel, and as self-appointed press agent to that fish I have extolled and demonstrated its powers to so many people that I have come to look upon it with paternalistic affection. Our first meeting was not auspicious, however, for in 1929, when I saw my first electric eel sluggishly swimming about at the old New York Aquarium and read on the label that such a four-foot animal could "knock down a horse," I was more than a little dubious. How could *one* animal produce a current? Where did the current go in the water and why didn't it electrocute the fish itself?

The scientific literature on the subject did not dispel my doubts either. Although such illustrious scientists as Galen, Lord Cavendish, Sir Humphry Davy, and Michael Faraday had all worked on electric fishes, none of them offered a satisfactory explanation of the fishes' powers or even a measurement of their potency. Faraday did determine that externally the current from an electric eel flows from head to tail, but that was about all. I hoped I could do better.

My chance came a few years later when, as a member of the Aquarium staff and armed with assorted wires and lamps, I set out to trap the eel's

current. I learned the hard way, first by being literally knocked off my feet when I attempted to pick up the fish in a net. Maybe it could down a horse! I gingerly noosed a bit of wire around the front part of the fish's elongate body, carefully holding on to the insulated portion, and did likewise with its tail. Now a lamp joining these two wires should light most brightly. But when I introduced the lamp into the circuit nothing at all happened, not even the slightest glow. With my first two fingers I touched the ends of the wires, but did not feel anything until I gently prodded the eel with a dry wooden handle of a net. The tingle in my hand proved that the fish was giving off electricity, but there was still not a sign of response from the lamp. What kind of electricity was this?

From here on my investigations took a most discouraging turn. I was convinced that until I could measure the eel's electricity, or at least prove that it *was* electricity, I was in no position to approach some hard-working physicist or biochemist and request that he devote some of his time to my pet interest. Nothing worked. Voltmeters, ammeters, and galvanometers either burned out or failed to register any "juice" at all, while electric lights both in water and out reacted not one bit. It seemed as if the only way to gauge this strange power was to feel it — a nerve-racking process. To the detriment of my pocketbook and the chagrin of my friends (who had lent me some of the instruments) I continued this unsuccessful experimenting intermittently for over a year.

Everyone who came into contact with the eel swore that it *was* electric — in fact many simply swore. One time I was trying to unload a whole hogshead of eels stored 'tween decks of a steamer. I had on a pair of heavy rubber gloves and we tried to move the hogshead towards the hatchway but

made no progress at all, because the container was much too heavy for me to handle alone, and when the longshoremen tried to help, their bare hands were continually subject to shock. One of them, a giant of a man, said he would fix it and, hooking in his dog hook, gave a mighty heave. Over went the hogshead, out came the water and the eels in a slithery, slimy cascade, and up and down went all the people in a mad dance to get their feet off the steel deck. Imagine fourteen writhing giant eels — some of them nine feet long — all giving off several hundred volts of electricity at the same time. I am still not sure how we managed to get them back into the hogshead and finally into the Aquarium.

The turning point in my investigations came one Saturday afternoon. I was trying out a new kind of lamp, a neon one — not the kind employed for advertising, but a small bulb or pip such as is used for a night light. The laboratory floor was liberally splashed with water and was covered by a maze of wires. Things were both literally and figuratively at loose ends, for the electric eel that was the subject of the experiments had been behaving badly. At times like these I try to remember the "Harvard law of animal behavior"¹ and laugh the trouble off, but this afternoon I was tired and discouraged and careless. Suddenly, I received the full shock of the eel, was thrown several feet into the air, and at the same time saw the neon pip burst into a dull orange glow. So intense was the jolt that I suspected the glow to be an illusion caused by the shock.

None too hopefully I traced out the circuit. Apparently, the pip was in simple direct circuit with the fish. I disturbed the eel with a rubber-gloved hand and again the light flickered on and off. All at once it dawned on me why I had been unable to register the current before. Ordinary electrical apparatus has an appreciable warm-up time, or lag, as it is called, before it begins to operate; commercial incandescent lamps have a lag of about one fiftieth of a second, for example. The electric eel's discharge was powerful enough, but of such short duration that it failed to excite the usual instruments and lights. I now also knew that the potential was at least eighty volts, because that was the minimum necessary to light such a neon pip.

2

Electrophorus electricus, as ichthyologists call it, looks like a caricature of an eel, being eel-shaped

¹ That animals under the most exactly controlled experimental conditions do exactly as they please.

but completely lacking the sinuous grace and streamlined contours of the common fish-market variety. It is a much stouter creature, a specimen forty-eight inches long having a girth of over a foot. From its bluntly rounded head to the tip of its clumsy tail it is a more or less uniform dull gray in color, with the exception of an expanse of salmon red on its throat and chin. This area is yellowish green in eels from Venezuela. The Amazonian variety, which I am here describing, belongs to the same species. Its skin is naked and wrinkled, with small flattened papillae irregularly distributed over it. Two absurd little round fins stick out on either side of its head like the ears on a cartoon character. No fins at all are to be found on its back, but one long continuous fin stretches along the posterior four fifths of its underside. By undulating this the eel moves about, seemingly as easily backwards as forwards.

Practically nothing is known about the life history of the electric eel. For example, we are not absolutely positive whether the fish lays eggs or gives birth to live young, although our anatomical investigations strongly point to the former method of reproduction. No one has yet seen an electric eel's egg with the embryo eel developing in it.

Very small eels have never been brought to this country, but collectors in South America have reported finding specimens an inch or so long at the ebb of flood waters towards the end of the rainy season. They are reported as accompanying an adult fish, sex unknown, swimming in a more or less compact group of from fifty to five hundred about the head of the presumed parent. At this size they can produce a discernible amount of electricity, although no more than enough to tingle the cupped hands in which they are held. The collectors are quite certain that the adults swim over the inundated lowlands during the wet season to spawn, not returning to the streams and rivers until the receding floods force them back. Fish six or eight inches long apparently have left the parental brood and seem to be on their own. At this stage of development the amount of electricity per unit length of eel is higher than at any other, for while the average voltage per centimeter of a large eel may be eight or ten, that of a small one is nearer thirty for each centimeter of electric tissue. Since any voltage smaller than this would be inadequate to discourage enemies or to immobilize food, it seems reasonable to assume that the young eels remain under the care of their parent until they are large enough to protect themselves with their own discharges.

My first device for actually measuring the electricity of the eel was a simple series of neon pips

connected with different resistances. With these I was able to make good estimates of the fish's voltage and found that it ranged to over three hundred and that Faraday had correctly determined the direction of the flow of current — from head to tail outside the body of the fish. Now I felt I had sufficient tangible evidence to approach some specialist for aid in further investigations. But biophysicists or physicists interested in animate things are few and far between, and I "peddled" my eel at a number of different institutions before I discovered one sufficiently interested in "eel-ectricity" to work with me on it. Dr. Richard T. Cox, at that time Professor of Physics at New York University, was already up to his ears in nuclear physics, but he agreed to come down to the old Aquarium and try out on the eel the new portable model Cathode Ray Oscillograph he had recently received.

Like a neon light, the oscillograph has no appreciable lag, and this made it suitable for picking up the eel's discharges; best of all, it gave a graphic picture of them, providing the means whereby the electricity drew a picture of itself on a fluorescent screen. We came up with some amazing results. We recorded voltages up to 550 and found that the average discharge in water amounted to about forty watts — more than enough to stun a man or a horse. Each discharge lasted only two one-thousandths of a second, but the eel could send out four hundred or more per second!

3

THAT a creature of flesh and blood could energize so much seemed fantastic. However, we soon learned that the eel was largely composed of a very special kind of flesh: electric tissue. All its vital organs — stomach, intestine, liver, and so forth — are confined to the front fifth of its body, and even its vent is located under the chin; the remainder of its elongate body is principally occupied by three pairs of electric organs. Measured by volume, nearly half of the fish is electric tissue. These organs are, in turn, made up of smaller units, which are separated by thin walls of electrically resistant tissue and act very similarly to cells in a storage battery. They are the producers of the electricity, each one creating about one tenth of a volt. It is by hooking these tiny batteries together in series, so to speak, that the eel builds up its powerful discharge. Just how it does this, throwing thousands of "switches" on and off hundreds of times a second, we do not know. That is another of the mysteries of the electric eel.

The electric organs of the eel are in three pairs: the Large Organs, the Bundles of Sachs, and the Organs of Hunter. The Large Organs are apparently so called for want of a better name; the Bundles of Sachs were named for Dr. Carl Sachs, the naturalist and Amazon explorer, who devoted much time to the study of the eel in the 1870's; the Organs of Hunter were first described by Dr. John Hunter, the eighteenth-century anatomist. The first of these is functionally the most important, and begins at about one fifth of the length of the fish behind the snout, continuing unchanged to a point about two-thirds the length of the fish behind the snout. From this place on, it tapers off and the resulting space is taken up by the Bundles of Sachs, which grow in size as the Large Organs diminish. The Bundles are responsible for the small discharges apparently used for locating food. The third pair of organs, those of Hunter, start at the same level as do the Large Organs and run to the end of the tail. In cross-section these are very small and their discharge is irregular and appears to be a function of that of the Large Organs. In relation to the area of the whole cross-section of the fish at a point midway from head to tail the electric organs occupy about 55 per cent. The appearance of electric tissue is different from any other. It is a flaccid whitish jelly and, by analysis, is composed of 92 per cent water.

Another mystery of the electric eel is its sensitivity to electric currents. When I finally got the fourteen eels — the ones that had been spilled out of their hogshead on the steamer deck — into a tank at the Aquarium, I noticed that the fish were aware of each other's discharges. (This was apparently the first time anyone had made any observations on more than one eel at a time — at least anyone who cared to talk about it.) The natural food of electric eels consists of fishes and other small aquatic animals which they stun before swallowing whole. Although they can be taught in captivity to eat cut-up raw fish and strips of beef, when first caught they will eat only live fish. While feeding these fourteen eels I discovered that when one fish discharged, stunning its prey, all the others in the tank came over, apparently to see what was going on, and they always went to the spot where the feeding eel had discharged, even if it had subsequently moved away. Apparently, eels were not only aware of one another's discharges but could nicely judge whence the current came.

Later on, Professor Cox and I "electrolyzed" a tankful of eels by dropping an electrode at each end of their tank and passing a strong current through the water. All the eels then gathered at the anode or positive pole. This was reasonable, because the

head of a discharging eel is always positive in respect to the body behind it, and the head would be exactly where a hungry eel would want to go, when he sensed his brother eel shocking some prey.

We now wanted to find out whether captive electric eels behaved like wild ones, since our researches were more or less based on the proposition that what the fish did in the Aquarium's tanks and laboratory was "normal." For this purpose Professor Cox established headquarters at the Goeldi Museum in Para at the mouth of the Amazon.² What he found confirmed our supposition: eels in Brazil behaved no differently from those in New York. However, he also discovered some electrical activity we hadn't noticed before. When lying quietly on the bottom, only moving occasionally to come to the surface for a gulp of air, — the fish is an air-breather and drowns if kept under water, — electric eels give off no electricity at all, but while "cruising about" they emit a series of weak discharges having a voltage of the order of fifty and at a rate of about fifty per second.

We first believed that these were warning discharges by which the eel kept potential enemies at a distance, and we were supported in this view by some observations on the eel's closest relatives. These are fishes of the family of gymnotid eels of which the electric eel is a member — elongate fishes, not at all related to the true, edible eel, but rather to the infamous piranhas of South American rivers and the radiant neon tetras of tropical-fish fame. Their popular name is knife fish, and a triangular carving knife, minus its handle, gives a good approximation of their body shape. None of these "cousins" to the electric eel has any electric powers, and all of them are more or less likely to have their long tails nipped off in the course of growing up. In fact, in some species it is almost impossible to find an intact specimen. Electric eels, on the other hand, almost never show such mutilations.

Undoubtedly the electric eel's discharges protect it, but the steady repetitions of minor discharges which it emits while swimming serve another purpose, quite as utilitarian. We discovered this use by carefully observing the behavior of a lone eel. Adult electric eels are virtually blind, since they develop cataracts when quite young, undoubtedly as a consequence of either their own electric shocks or those of their fellows. Nevertheless, when a food fish was put into its tank, the lone eel unerringly made for it. That the eel could see through the clouded lenses of its eyes seemed unbelievable; yet to be positive that sight was not being utilized, we

repeated the test in nearly total darkness. Not only did the eel easily find the food fish in the dark, but it could even distinguish between a dead floating food fish and a piece of floating wood of approximately the same size.

Was the eel using its weak discharges to locate the fish? We couldn't stop the eel from broadcasting its current, so perhaps we could stop it from receiving that current back, and this we did. Arranged in definite patterns on both sides and the top of an electric eel's head are series of prominent pits. No such development is found in other gymnotids; therefore we thought these might in some way be associated with electric powers. We painted the head of our eel with an insulating lacquer, thus sealing off the pits from any possible electric impulses. Sure enough, that fish now failed to find any prey, living or dead, dropped into its tank, and simply swam aimlessly around. If the food fish was placed on its lips, however, it would gulp the meal down; and when the lacquer was removed, the eel once again easily located its food.

The details of this wonderfully acute eel "radar" have yet to be worked out; we believe it operates something like this. The minor discharges of the eel radiate out in all directions from the rear portion of its tail, the area in which they are produced. Whenever they come into contact with some solid object in the water, they are reflected back towards the sensory pits on the eel's head. By turning its head and discharging again, the eel can so orient itself that both left and right sides receive the reflected pulses simultaneously. Then it is pointed towards the reflecting object. When we realize that this locating of an object is done through a complex "background" of reflected impulses (from the walls of the tank, for example); that although the impulses travel at the speed of light, the eel can differentiate between differences of a few inches; and that the eel can make allowance for its own movement as well as that of living prey, the truly amazing character of this behavior is apparent. Nothing I have ever learned about this incredible creature has astounded me more.

4

ELECTRIC fishes in general have played a long role in medical history, if not always an honorable one. No one knows how long the Indians of Surinam have employed the discharge of the electric eel in the treatment of disease. Even today in Brazil its flesh is considered by some to be a cure for rheumatism. One learned rheumatic doctor, however, told

² A popular account of this expedition is to be found in Shelby Shackelford's *Electric Eel Calling* (Scribner's, New York, 1941).

Professor Cox that he had eaten eel meat and, of the two, he considered rheumatism the more bearable. Dr. Peter Kellaway of McGill University has made a thorough study of the use of electric fishes in medicine, and the first record he found of the therapeutic use of these creatures' electric powers was in A.D. 46 when one Scribonius Largus, a Roman physician, claimed the shock of the torpedo to be a cure for headache and gout.

For any type of gout, a live black torpedo should, when the pain begins, be placed under the feet. The patient must stand on a moist shore washed by the sea and he should stay like this until his whole foot and leg up to the knee is numb. This takes away present pain and prevents pain from coming on if it has not already arisen.

The discharge of electric catfishes, too, has been utilized since ancient times by African tribes as a cure for various ailments, and one Moslem physician of the eleventh century thought that to place a live electric catfish on the brow of a person suffering an epileptic fit was beneficial. Electrotherapy was all the rage in Europe during the eighteenth century, and electric fishes vied successfully with Leyden jars and other shocking machines. When many electric eels were imported for this purpose, people flocked to them for relief from gout, rheumatism, and other ills. One London advertisement of 1777 gives a price of two shillings and sixpence per treatment of "natural" electricity from a "torporific eel."

The importance of the electric eel in present-day medical science rests not with its use as a shocking machine, but with its physiology. The physico-chemical reactions that take place in a nerve whenever an impulse passes over it are of prime importance to physiologists, and books have been written on this subject alone. A nerve is so small, however, that to determine quantitatively just what chemical reactions are taking place inside it is next to impossible. But the discharge of an electric eel is identical in nature with the passage of an impulse over a nerve, and since thousands of times more tissue is involved, the chemical changes can be much more easily measured.

Briefly, this is how such an investigation is made. A tiny piece of electric tissue is removed from a resting eel; then the fish is made to discharge and the amount of electricity produced is carefully recorded. Another small piece of electric tissue is now taken out. By chemically analyzing these two pieces, the changes which took place in the electric organ during the electric discharges are determined. This amount of change is then correlated with the amount of electricity produced. Studies like this

have enabled Dr. David Nachmansohn of the College of Physicians and Surgeons to confirm certain basic theories on the nature of nervous activity—a matter of fundamental importance to biologists, physicians, neurologists, and psychologists. And lest it be thought that such treatment of an eel injures it, let me point out that not only is the fish apparently unaware of the operation, since it does not discharge during the process, but so great are its regenerative capabilities that in less than a month not even a scar remains where the pieces of tissue were removed.

One of the key substances in the production of electric energy in electric fishes, and in the production of a nervous impulse too, is cholinesterase. During the war, it became necessary to obtain large amounts of this rare chemical, which cannot yet be synthetically produced but must be extracted from living tissue. Ounce for ounce, the electric organs of the eel are far richer in cholinesterase than any other known tissue; so when the Chemical Warfare Service called for large amounts of it in order to study the effects of a new, deadly nerve gas they were investigating, scores of eels were sacrificed to provide them with the precious substance.

Not only is the electric eel well known to scientists these days; it is familiar to laymen as well. Thousands of people witnessed a demonstration of its powers in the New York Zoological Society's building at the World's Fair, and even more now come to the Lion House in the Zoological Park in the Bronx to see it. But tall tales die hard: the one Humboldt told about the electric eel still circulates around, even in some high-class encyclopedias and natural history books. Humboldt reported that South American Indians capture the eels by driving horses into water containing the fish. When the eels have exhausted themselves shocking the horses, the Indians harpoon them and remove them from the water with impunity. Our investigations have proved that this notion is tommyrot, because an electric eel can't be exhausted so easily. If kept moist, so that it can breathe properly, it will discharge intermittently all day long without showing appreciable fatigue.

Even after giving off electric shocks at its greatest rate, for twenty minutes, a five-minute rest is all that is needed to bring its activity back to normal. In fact, one of our leading battery manufacturers has been studying the eel, trying to pick up some pointers on current-production. One of the company's experts wistfully remarked to me the other day: "If we only could make batteries that would operate as efficiently as that eel!"



AN ATLANTIC STORY

SOMETHING YOU NEVER FORGET

by WILLIAM GEORGE

IT WAS cold and the hills behind the city were all autumn and alone on the streets and we walked to the house along a hill at night. The summit was dark and the slope below was lamp-lighted at the street crossings. We were together and alone and Jan was ready to cry. I held her hand and she smiled. She controlled herself very well walking on the hill in the cold in the fall.

By the time we arrived at the house I felt pretty bad. I opened the door and she went in first. She started to cry before I could say anything. I would have said something even then but it would have been awful. I simply waited until all at once she would not cry any more.

In the bedroom was a small radio. I pushed open the portal curtains and stepped in and turned the radio on. The radio warmed and music came on and then I did not want it. I would not hear that now. She was crying and all the slow-motion in the world seemed to be far away rushing, and I remembered our history faster and faster as the slow stuff went out of sight.

We invented the whole thing one night in the ghostly equipment of the moon. Jan looked beautiful, but because we had grown up together I could only guess she was really that beautiful. The place was very familiar on a hill under some pine trees outside of town. We had always come there and it

WILLIAM GEORGE, who broke into the *Atlantic* with a story called "The First Twenty-nine Minutes," saw three years of service in the Navy and is now headed for a degree in biology at Stanford University. Here he records, with an accurate ear and a sensitive spirit, the adventures of the servicemen he knew best — men on leave or going home, or as in this latest story, not going home.

was there we composed a world I had heard about vaguely. I told her how I wanted to be large in that world and she said, you don't really have to, you know, and I said I must, and she said I'll go with you — and she did. We left the town and the hill and the ghostly equipment of the moon.

Soon I went away to the war. I never had a chance, you see. She went home and I think maybe something got her. I mean, something got everyone. Everybody got whatever it was. I don't know what it was, but God, it hurt them terribly. When the fighting was over we all knew it was different in the world somewhere. But then it was different in the next room too because she called me.

"Yes," I said.

"I'm through with this," she said.

"All right."

I moved into where she was looking out the window with her back to me.

"It doesn't do any good," she said.

"Yes it does."

"I cry too much."

"It does some good, though."

"Darling. Please don't start that now."

She turned around and put her arms around me. She had light dark hair and her skin against my face was wet and cold.

"Cry some more," I told her.

"Not now, darling."

"You may as well get rid of it."

"No. I'm not mad."

"I know it. Go ahead. Cry again."

"Nonsense," she said. She kissed me and I could see through the window where a sky across the

valley held no distance in it. This morning the wind exploded off the mountains and now the clouds had slipped down and the street lamps shine white and small and you imagine it is raining very lightly and there are the people moving under the rain and some of them hold themselves near a street light to have a cigarette and wait for a feeling to happen. How I felt was in the rain just then.

"Go ahead," I said.

"Now?" she asked.

"Yes. Right now."

She was holding on and her shoulders shook and I held her tighter and she was sobbing hard and quietly and I held on to myself too. She did not continue it long this time.

"That's it," she said. "I'm absolutely finished."

"You're sure?"

"I am. Really, Mike."

She wiped her eyes and glanced out the window.

"Jan?"

"Yes, darling."

"It helps?"

"I feel fine."

"It does, doesn't it?"

"Oh, Mike, I have to sometimes."

She was really finished crying now. Her little perfect body lengthened some against me and all the slow-motion soared up closer and floated, waiting. I knew she was trying to refill everything with how much we were to one another and she said: —

"Honestly, Mike, I get away with the worst things."

I kept still.

"Don't you hate it, Mike?"

"No," I said.

"Mike. Why?"

"I don't know."

"Yes you do. You must."

"Why must I?"

"You do though, darling."

"Maybe."

"I know you must."

"All right."

I had no space-like concrete knowledge to enable me to say exactly why I did not hate it. Which was because maybe it was warm and natural and sort of like the soul returning backwards. And I said: —

"You see, Jan, well, it *is* funny. I don't mind at all. You see, I dream sometimes it is your way of praying."

2

SHE certainly felt the quiet then. For the longest time we stood still without any talking. It was quiet

in the room and it must have been enormously quiet outside. Honestly, it must have been enormous. And occurring to me was a reminder that tonight was almost like other quiet times in the war when I used to stand suddenly very still as I felt an emotion and then slowly and deliberately made a shape for it in my mind.

Usually those shapes I made had plenty of lamp-lighted hills and fall weather in them. Sometimes they were gray from a fog we had flown through back in home-country and sometimes dozens of cold white sunsets spread beyond a single plateau and they were the best companions. They took up the empty places and passed away cool and came back exactly on a signal I never really understood. But it was a little like tonight. You take the breathing down inside and neither desire any end to it nor a beginning again.

A car went by on the side street on the hill and a line of lights were in the valley.

"Shall we go to bed?" I said.

"Shall we?"

"Yes."

We undressed and in the bed then she had something to talk about.

"Mike," she said, "this is being home, isn't it?"

"I'm sure of it," I said.

"Thank you, darling."

"Yes. It's being in bed with you."

"Mike. That wasn't nice."

"Yes it is."

"I feel a little serious, darling. Don't joke me."

"You feel so serious." I had my arms around her and she felt so serious. I repeated, "You feel so very serious."

She slapped my face and we laughed together and I held her so she could not hit me another one and the other seriousness was there before we could laugh again.

"But we're happy," I said. "What would I do there?"

"We might try."

"No," I said, "I won't have it. I won't go home."

"It's nice this time of year," she said lightly.

"All along the street they are burning leaves and visiting one another beside fires."

"I wish you hadn't gone home. What ever happened back there?" An old question by now.

She did not answer.

"When we were away, what happened?" I said bitterly. "Everyone acts hurt. What the hell are they so hurt about? They act like they had done the fighting." That was the truth all right. Everyone at home acted like they had been kicked in the stomach and they tried to smile through that sick

feeling. It did not occur to me then they probably felt sorry for me, or perhaps they were sorry for her.

"Aren't you happy?" I asked.

"Yes."

"We're doing all right. We'll be rich yet."

"Don't blame anything on the town, darling. It's still a nice town."

"No, it isn't," I said. "It's impossible. Nothing is there for anyone. There isn't anything for a young man."

"I don't really want to go back," she said. "I thought perhaps it meant something to you. Can't we simply not go back and not hate it?"

"It means nothing."

"Mike. You shouldn't hate it so."

"Somewhere I hate it."

"You shouldn't," she said. "I wish you didn't hate it."

"I don't want to hear about it." She knew I was not being cruel. She was a very wise woman, and any woman understands cruelty and the rules it is used with.

"We'll not discuss it any more," I said. "We do better not talking."

"And you shouldn't hate it."

"Yes. I shouldn't hate anything."

"Mike, am I scolding?"

"Let's call it *praying* again."

"I think we'd better say good night," she said.

"I don't want to fight."

"I'm sorry, Jan. I didn't mean that."

"I know it."

After that we lay together and gradually she was sleeping and I passed the night through my brains and brought her back and heard her crying silently and I felt it silently.

She had cried, and, of course, I had been right. It was her way of praying. It was all that and all the hill lamp-lighted below the house and the walk home at night knowing someone was going to cry tonight. And it was easier this way. She did not have to cry in her sleep any more. Earlier in our marriage she had cried quite often in her sleep and after she told me about missing it all only when sleeping, I would wake her up and she lost her fear of waking and missing anything. Then she cried just once in a while as she had this evening.

Soon I got tired thinking. That was something else I would not listen to right now. I would listen to a prayer. I said a prayer they told me always frightens away the goblins. "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep; if I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

The last thing I remember is I missed her and I wanted to go to sleep.

BOY HUNTING

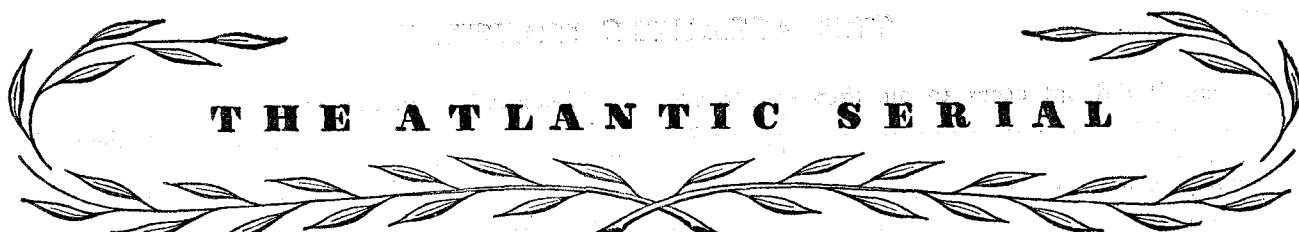
by ELIZABETH BOHM

His rifle gleams in autumn day;
The falcon in him doffs the hood,
A golden bolt with eyes of blood
Stares round upon the groves for prey.

Treading deftly as dancers tread,
Barely stirring the papery drifts,
Lovely and merciless, he lifts
The clean attention of his head.

Squirrel, be quiet on your bough,
Plume snuggled warm above your back;
Deer, take to water, leave no track;
Incarnate Death is passing now

In a dawn-cheeked boy with noon-clear eye,
His heart unsoftened and unworn,
Who would not mind your blood, nor mourn
Your wound, nor grieve to watch you die.



THE ATLANTIC SERIAL

ONE FINE DAY

by MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES

SUMMARY. — Laura Marshall and her husband Stephen live in the country near the tiny English village of Wealding. Stephen has returned from the war to find the train to London as stuffy as ever, his garden choked with weeds, his daughter Victoria growing up fast, and Laura dead weary from the daily battle of rationed shopping and unceasing housework. "So far as I can see," says Laura's mother, Mrs. Herriot, reproachfully, "you spend the day doing the work of an unpaid domestic servant. When I think how you were brought up —"

And indeed Laura, as she tries to keep their home alive, does think back to those lazy, hot summers before the war when several maids and a cook ran the house so smoothly. As she listens to her part-time charwoman, Mrs. Prout, and watches their gardener for a day, frail, deaf old Voller, in his hopeless struggle with the weeds, Laura remembers the clipped turf, the roses, and their friends chatting through the long June dusks. Now she tends the ducks and chickens herself, and as this installment opens, is riding alone on her old bicycle to find her runaway dog Stuffie among the Roman stones of Barrow Down.

22

VICTORIA could be counted upon to be late home from tea with Mouse Watson. There were perhaps a couple of hours in hand, thought Laura, before her child would turn up, overheated, tired, green on the seat of her gym knickers, bleeding at each knee, and completely radiant. All the same, she must hurry. From now on it was easy going, no more hills. She sailed along easily on her bicycle, feeling the rush of air pleasantly on her bare legs and down the front of her dress. The lanes were narrow now, a tangle of little more than tracks along which a haycart could just amble and leave here a swathe on the hooks of a blackberry briar, there a rakish tuft on a slender spray of pink and paler pink dog rose.

The finger posts had been conscientiously removed early in the war, in case it should prove vital to German strategy to learn how many hedges their tanks would have to hurdle to Grimsditch or Barrow. So far they had not all been put back, and walkers with maps slung round their necks in talc sporrans often wandered and wandered, ending up angrily in a plowed field or somebody's sweet, dark, smoking midden. But Laura knew the way. By the broken-down cart shed she left her bicycle, putting the bag of sweets and the chocolate in her bag, for one could ride no further. There! The

disreputable old thing sank obligingly into the nettles and the wild garlic, one wheel sticking out with an odd debauched effect of a female leg dangling. Had she brought Stuffie's lead? She began to walk up the track towards the hut.

The ground was rough, embedded in places with patches of cut stones laid together by design. The Roman stones, thought Laura. How quiet it was! A twig cracked sharply under her feet and instantly, close at hand, a dog barked. Another answered it, and another, and — was it? Yes, without any doubt, she could recognize Stuffie's shrill voice in the middle of the pandemonium. She turned through a break in the trees into a rough field. There was the hut, in reality an old railway carriage which stood hideous and forlorn in the bleached grass, out of its native element, as though some aged locomotive had wandered and spawned here, and crawled away into the bracken to die.

Four or five dogs, of vague greyhound and mongrel shape, ran forward towards Laura, barking furiously. Smoke rose from a small stick fire. Something was cooking, and garments flapped from a line, very domestic, very peaceful. Socks, a striped something, perhaps a shirt or a pajama coat? Stuffie's voice sounded close and shrill, with no particular note of instinctive recognition, just companionably yelling with the rest. Sheets of corrugated iron at one end of the railway coach made a rough enclosure. Laura stepped up and

MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES has been the *New Yorker's* correspondent in England since 1939. This is the final installment of her novel, which will be published this month under the Atlantic-Little, Brown imprint.

looked in at her dog, who sat beside a bowl containing fragments of food.

"Stuffy!" she said. "You little wretch!" But she was so glad to see the little beast, for they got caught in traps, they died down rabbit holes. As usual, Stuffy rolled over on her back and paddled the air hysterically, a hypocrite, trading shamelessly on her sex and the mushy hearts of humans, for she was not in the least sorry. Given a chance, she would do it again and again, Laura well knew. But she lay there, rolling an eye, quivering ecstatically, beseeching, "Forgive! For the last time, forgive!" although somewhere in the loll of her tongue was the shadow of an impudent grin. "You horrid little nuisance," said Laura, stooping to pat her.

The gypsy came round the side of the hut, stepping quietly on the tussocky grass.

"Ah, you've come for her," he said. "I was going to wait till this evening, and if you hadn't come, I'd have got on my bike and brought her along."

"I hoped she'd come home by herself," Laura said. "She does sometimes."

"Not this time," he said, smiling. "She was out on the spree, wasn't you, old girl? But I've been out, and I shut her up there so you'd see her if you came over. I didn't want her following me."

"It was my own fault," said Laura. "I left the door open for a minute, and she must have slipped off. I thought she was in her basket."

"She was wore out," the man said, "lying out there in the bracken asleep last evening, curled up like a little fox she was."

He pulled back one of the corrugated sheets, and Stuffy slipped through, cheerful and unabashed. Laura picked her up. "Get down!" threatened the gypsy to one of the greyhounds. Which of those wagging tails, which cut of the nose, Laura wondered, would repeat itself a few weeks hence in the fat blind slugs floundering in the straw-filled wooden box? She sighed, feeling her dog's stout body warm against her side.

"She has been a great nuisance for you, I'm afraid," she said.

"No trouble," said the gypsy. "Dogs do take to me, no denying it. Look what I've collected in my time! They're fond of me, I'm fond of them. Get down!" he said again, gently, to the mole-colored greyhound.

"She's had her dinner today, and a good dinner yesterday," he said to Laura.

"That's very kind of you. How much do I owe you?"

He looked at her, smiling, and she felt herself coloring. That was the wrong tone, her mother's tone. Mrs. Herriot spoke like that, crisp and kind,

when she stood at the doors of the little gray cottages from which she would carry away the fourteen-year-old child in her talons. How much do I owe you, so much more delicate than a blunt How much, implying a favor done, a little contract, a bond. So often Laura had heard her mother ask that, standing holding the sitting of ducks' eggs or the cabbage plants or the bundle of Colonel Herriot's shirts. But here it sounded wrong, a dreadfully false note.

"Why, it's nothing," said the man. "She just dipped in with the rest and enjoyed it." He jerked his head towards the hill. "Plenty of rabbits up there for the pot."

23

SHE thought how funny it was that, though he had lived up here in the old railway coach and she had lived down in her house in Wealding for years, she had no idea of his name. He was anonymous himself as one of the rabbits scuttling into the fern. Even Mrs. Prout called him "that gypsy fellow up on Barrow Down." That gypsy fellow had been drunk again last Saturday in the Leg of Mutton, drunk as a lord, happy as a king seldom is, rolling off somehow on his bicycle with them dogs on a string. Talk about the blind leading the blind! Ernie Dummer, going out to look at an ailing sheep, had found him tumbled off his bike at the side of the road, curled up sleeping on a heap of road metal as though it were feathers, and the dogs stretched out beside him with their noses on their paws, quiet and knowing, not even growling when they heard Ernie coming.

But that was all Mrs. Prout knew about him. He had never had a wife, he appeared never to have had parents. He made a bit of money helping with the harvest, mending pots and pans and the old rush-seated chairs out of the cottages, or doctoring people's sick animals. He had a wonderful way with him there. Many in Wealding would rather have the gypsy to look at their cow or tyke than Miss Stemp, the vet from Bridbury, who bustled out in her smart jodhpurs with her smart little case, like a regular doctor. But the beasts themselves seemed to have more confidence in the smell of the gypsy's hand. You saw him down in Trumper's shop, buying his rations while the dogs waited outside. You saw him in the Leg of Mutton when he came down off the hillside for his weekly spree. You never saw him in anyone's house, sitting in the armchair having a friendly chat. No, when he had made his little round, he sheered off back to the old railway coach again. Mrs. Prout

had to say, however, that no one spoke anything bad of him, and he had set her tabby cat's paw lovely, speaking all the time to old Tib as though she was a human.

Laura looked at him, wondering about him. For instance, how old? Difficult to tell: he was sparely built, and this queer solitary life up here had failed to stamp him with any of the usual identification marks. He was like a letter without a postmark, no clue given as to how far or how long he had traveled. The letter was not blank, far from it, only it was written in a handwriting she did not recognize. She looked at him, slightly puzzled.

"Well, I'm awfully grateful to you," she said, "I can't thank you enough."

"That's all right," he said. He put out his hand and very tenderly scratched Stuff's head. She tried to squirm towards him, wriggling under Laura's arm. The other dogs had wandered off, flopping down with permanent contented airs at the door of the dreadful old hut. How ugly it was, really hideous, high and dry under the great oak tree. The door stood open, and it looked very bare inside. Laura tried to picture the gypsy in there, doing little chores, frying bacon, washing out those socks which hung so domestically on the line. But the appalling little place refused to come to life as a home. It remained anonymous, too, casual as a mountain hut in which climbers shelter for the night and pass on, leaving the folded blankets and the stacked firewood for the next man.

You could shake a house like that off overnight, thought Laura, suddenly envious. No voices in there cry Clean me, polish me, save me from the spider and the butterfly. No sonorous or silvery voices tick through the night, saying that Time is passing, but that bricks and mortar must grind human bones to make its bread. Was it not, perhaps, extraordinary wisdom to live as casually as this, with Barrow Down for your back door and England for your front yard? She looked ahead of her and said aloud "Oh!" For it was higher here than she had remembered. The country was tumbled out before her like the contents of a lady's workbox, spools of green and silver and pale yellow, ribbed squares of brown stuff, a thread of crimson, a stab of silver, a round, polished gleam of mother-of-pearl. It was all bathed in magic light, the wonderful transforming light in which known things look suddenly new.

"Oh," said Laura, "how perfectly lovely it is today!"

"Yes, it's grand," he said.

"You can't see Wealding from here, can you?" she asked, searching among the thick, woolly skeins

of the heavy summer foliage for the familiar roofs.

"No, it lies there, behind those trees," he said, pointing. "You'll see it as you go higher."

24

I'm not going higher, she thought, I'm going home. We do not all, she thought with an odd inward surge of exasperation, live in an appalling old shack with a pack of mongrels, my good man. Victoria will be home. Old Voller will be hobbling along to net the raspberries and set out the tender little lettuces in rows with maddening slowness. And suddenly an awful thought struck her. Had she shut the larder door when she put Miss Margesson's gooseberries on the shelf? The fish, and the cat left in the kitchen — no, already in her imagination it was eaten, and the cat was washing itself neatly, complacently, shaking out a paw daintily like a fan. Oh horrors, horrors! You cannot, Mrs. Vyner had observed earnestly in the echoing church, you cannot, no matter what the Walk of Life, escape from its Responsibilities — she had broken holly, and seemed to bless it with a damp glance — and still retain your Self-respect. True, true, thought Laura with depression, noticing that the gypsy was far from clean, that his dark eyes might even be sly.

"But it's dreadfully lonely for you here," she said. "In winter especially, I should think."

Her mother's voice again, a shade patronizing, just about to offer a blanket or a bowl of good, nourishing soup. He shook his head cheerfully.

"I don't miss company," he said. "The old hill gives me plenty."

"I suppose you've got a wireless in there?" she asked, nodding towards the dreadful railway coach.

"No," he said.

He laughed out loud, as though the idea amused him. She had to smile too, for the sound was so curiously, unusually — yes, that was the only word for it — so curiously merry. Children laughed like that, but grownups hardly ever. Mrs. Prout's huge bosom shook, Mr. Vyner boomed and brayed, Mavis Porter's giggles floated out of the twilight at the end of the lane, irritating as the soulless shakes and whistles of Mrs. Bunt's canaries. The gypsy, however, laughed merrily, merrily, under the greenwood tree. He laughed richly, contentedly, as a fat man laughs, as though there were layers of jolly fat on his spiritual bones. For actually he was so thin his old trousers were too big for him, and they were tied round his waist with a bit of string.

"I'm not the one for a wireless," he said.

She had still a half-irritated wish to trap him somehow, to bring him down into the native reservation with the rest of them. For we all have to do it. We stand in queues, shuffling our feet, waiting for the wrath of Mr. Kellett, the fishmonger, to descend like icy, dirty water on our meek heads. We put on our bowler hats and journey to London, though the day calls for us to live like gods. We get into the bus, the door clicks like a mousetrap, and it rolls forward towards Miss Grant and the hot classroom, Miss Trasker and "Water Lily Elves" and attention to the slurs. We conform, we conform, all of us. Why should anybody escape?

"But sometimes you come down into the village," she said.

"When I want to buy something to eat or something to drink," he said.

He laughed again. Somehow he knew that she knew he had wobbled off his bike and slept on the heap of road metal.

"Mr. Marshall wants someone to do a bit of gardening," she said suddenly. "Do you garden? Would you be able to come some evenings?"

"Well, I don't know," he said. "Maybe I'll call round one night and take a look at the job. Yes, maybe I'll come along with the dogs one night and talk to Mr. Marshall."

But he wouldn't come. She knew that perfectly well.

"Good-bye," she said, "and thanks again for looking after my dog."

"Are you going up to the top?" he asked. "Seems a pity, as you're so near. It's wonderful fine up there today."

"No, I must go home," Laura said. "I've left my bicycle down at the bottom of the track."

"Good day, then," he said.

She turned and walked out of the clearing. He whistled to the dogs to stop them following her. When she got on the other side of the trees, she set Stuffy down and hitched the lead onto her collar. Now, she thought, quickly home to the fish, the cat, to Victoria, to the domestic cave. But she stood quite still, looking up the track where it twisted higher between the sunken banks and the smooth roots of trees which seemed to splay and float in the surf of last year's leaves, like the roots of seaweed which would float up, up, into the lighter green wash far above. Perhaps she might go to the top after all, she thought. Why not? It was suddenly immensely important that she should climb Barrow Down. There was so seldom the time or the opportunity to step even so slightly out of the common round, the horribly trivial task. She looked over her shoulder to see if the gypsy had

followed and was watching her through the trees. But there was not a sound, not a sign. The rough clearing and the nasty little cabin might have been a dream.

"Come along," she said to Stuffy, giving a little pull to the lead, for her dog seemed to be holding back, pulling back towards the railway coach and the gypsy.

They began to climb the hill.

25

At the top, a slight breeze fanned her hot face. Down below, it had seemed that there was not a breath of air, the heavy trees were billowing feather beds in which even the birds were languidly silent. But up here there was a hilltop freshness which just stirred the tops of the few gaunt trees with which Barrow Down was crowned. Some said the clump was something to do with Druids; others, that it had been planted by the whim of a bygone Cranmer. It made, at any rate, a convenient shelter for picnic parties and their wavering spirit lamps. Today there were no picnic parties.

Halfway up, Laura and Stuffy, by mutual consent, had stopped and disentangled themselves from each other. After all, thought Laura, stooping to unhook the lead, it is pretty safe to say that there will be nobody up here. On Sundays there were always walkers with ash sticks and dogs, and at least one stout, panting woman toiling good-humoredly to the top with a gray little man in a town Sunday suit. On Sundays, too, came the riders from the livery stables in Bridbury, bouncing young women in open-necked shirts, young men whose sleek pasted hair would lift in the wind as they lolloped along on the knowing old hacks. On a weekday, it would be a surprise to meet anybody but, perhaps, an occasional shepherd. "So you should be all right," said Laura to Stuffy, who had been apparently working herself towards an apoplexy. But directly she was released, she ran busily along, showing no inclination to double back to the gypsy's greyhounds. This unexpected bonus of a walk was delightful. Love was forgotten. She ran, she sniffed, she barked furiously on the track of squirrels who lightly, scornfully, shinned up the masts like cabin boys.

And Laura had been right. They had Barrow Down to themselves except for an army of rabbits who leaped in the air and vanished. Some sheep appeared by the dew pond, saw Stuffy, and began running with the tucked-down chins, the braced behinds, and rapid little steps of elderly ladies try-

ing to catch a bus. Laura followed in the same direction. She felt that she would die if she did not rest for a moment, she was so sticky and out of breath. Her heart was pounding. She must be in terribly bad training! When she had walked half-way round the Barrow clump, she threw herself down on the grass and stared up at the sky. It was softly, deeply blue, paler than at midday, and the larks singing invisibly high up in it threw down their eerie, other-world thread of song to Laura lying on her back among the little milky blue and pink flowers. The ground beneath her seemed just faintly to rock and sway in a lovely, sleepy movement. It shook with a mighty, gusty roaring, the pounding of Stuff's paws and her panting as she approached and tried affectionately to lie down on Laura's face.

"Go away," said Laura.

She sat up, rolling Stuff over with one hand while with the other she pushed the damp hair up from her neck. Ah, how delicious! She sighed, and for the first time dropped her gaze into the great humming bowl of England which lay at her feet. It startled her by being so much vaster than she remembered. For it was years since she had climbed up here — no, not since the first summer of the war. Then some woman friend had been staying with her, Sonia Peel, it was, and they had packed tea and brought it up on Barrow Down as a little celebration of Mark Peel's sixth birthday. Stephen was in camp up in Yorkshire, Sonia's husband was on a destroyer somewhere or other, the wireless went on quietly and reasonably saying awful things every evening when they sat in the somehow stillborn, depressing coziness of two women having a sherry together.

It was not altogether for Mark that they made the little effort of the picnic party. Cutting the bread, spreading the jam, screwing up the thermos flask and the children's milk bottle, were calming ritual gestures, promising that the everyday world would continue. The pink and white birthday cake, elegantly fluted — for there was still a cook in Laura's kitchen — was normal and reassuring as a cheerful known face. But as they lit the candles, somewhat unsuccessfully, among the paper bags and the ants up on Barrow Down, Laura had suddenly sat back on her heels and said Isn't it —? and it was, unmistakably, a distant siren moaning from the coast. Then Bridbury's siren had spoken, and before anyone had bitten into the birthday icing, the sky was chattering with machine-gun fire, high, seemingly harmless, until down came the planes, turning, groaning, bellowing in their agony as the black smoke puffed out. One — two —

three, shouted Victoria. Poor Sonia Peel, who was expecting another baby, sat like a large white tent, a hideously visible target exposed on the top of Barrow Down. The noise died away. After a pause, the sirens breathed a gentler, one-syllable song. They gathered up sandwich papers and brushed away crumbs. *What a nice birthday*, said Mark.

26

So on that occasion Laura could not remember giving much attention to the view, and before the war, somehow, she and Stephen had little time to climb up to Barrow Down. It loomed over them always, it was the background of their days. But scramble up to it — ah no, very seldom. They knew it was there and that the view from the top was the best, people said, in three counties. Sometimes they walked an energetic week-end guest up there. God, to have *this* at your door! the guests would exclaim, scooping the wonderful air into their fogbound lungs, planting their shiny city brogues firmly on the moss and thinking vaguely of the Druids, of Drake, of this precious stone set in a silver sea, of the imminent Sunday roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. To which the Marshalls would make a modest murmur and avoid catching each other's eye. For how often did they make the effort? In the week-ends there were always people coming, there was tennis, Stephen was shooting at Cranmer. And since the war had ended, Laura thought, they were still more bound to the tyrant house, she to the kitchen, Stephen, when he was home, to the lawn mower and the woodpile, the dirty boots and the devilish bindweed. When had they been up here last together, simply together? She could not remember.

However, here she was, she thought in some surprise. Because she had heard the telephone and run in from the garden, leaving the door open, because Stuff had slipped off to a light-of-love by hole in the hedge, and field track, and mysterious, beckoning scent in the damp ditch — here she was. Her day which had begun so prosaically in hot Bridbury, dangling a limp, resigned basket outside Rosemary's Tea Shoppe, had landed her on top of the lonely hill. Ah Stuff, what a good turn you really did me, she thought, gently tickling the stout stomach of her dog, a sagging pinkish carpetbag worn shapeless with careless maternity. You and Mrs. Porter, she thought, what a pair of you. Easy come, easy go, does it matter who, a greyhound or a fat corporal named Tuck, a black mongrel or a thin Canadian? And really, said Stuff's rolling

eye, it does not matter, not in the least. Love beamed from Stuffy's eye and from her panting mouth, love unselective, uncritical, bestowing its favors without calculation. Annabel Trumper would marry Mr. Rudge, and an excellent thing, Mrs. Cranmer had pronounced it. But Live lightly, preached Stuffy and Mrs. Porter as they frisked in the bracken. Live lightly, the gypsy had said without a word as he stood looking at her outside the awful little shack, looking at the gray-haired Wealding lady who had come fussily, leash in hand and tip in purse, searching for her dog.

It is all very well, thought Laura, fretfully, but what can I do? I cannot cut and run like Stuffy away from the dull basket and the all too familiar bowl. I am a perfectly happy married woman, simply getting a little grayer, duller, more tired than I should be getting, because my easier sort of life has come to an end. Neither can I drag Victoria and Stephen to live in an old railway carriage planted on a hillside. Unfortunately we are all slaves of the turned-back fresh linen, the polished wood reflecting the civilized candlelight, the hot water running into the shining bath. No, she thought, there was nothing to be done. Beside her, Stuffy suddenly ceased to pant, withdrawing her tongue and closing her jaw with a slight click, as though a switch had been turned off. Closing her eyes, pillowing her dusty head, she slept, virtuous, undreaming. So much wiser than humans, who would excuse or accuse or hate somebody, she had loved and been lost. Found again, full of happiness at regaining Laura, she sighed, stretched out on the grass, and slept deeply. The pinkish carpetbag bulged and collapsed peacefully, soothingly, with her breathing.

27

I WISH, thought Laura, that Stephen were here, looking at the view beside me. If he were here, she would say to him — what would she say? She did not know, but there was something to be said, something which was often on the tip of her tongue but which eluded her in the rushed moments at breakfast, the evenings when he was tired and she was tired. But if he were here beside her, stretched out on the grass looking at England, she might think of it. She sat clasping her hands together round her knees, her scratched and reddened left hand uppermost, on which the thin gold wedding ring looked surprised and bright. Over there was the sea, a misty streak sharply outlined by a broad ribbon of white light. Tomorrow, Laura promised herself, she and Victoria would be there, eating

their sandwiches among the sand dunes. Why had they not done it today? Why, for that matter, had she not taken the time to climb the hill and look at the view all these years? Barrow Down was at her door, it was too idiotic, but there she was all the time, down in her house in Wealding, struggling to keep up a way of life which had really ended. Ah, fool, she thought. Foolish matron sitting beside that other wiser matron, the snoring Stuffy, who simply gamboled off to find what she wanted beneath the broad blue sky of this fine summer day.

She sat looking at the view. It drew the eye on to distant hills, to aerial villages, to unsubstantial, heavenly wraiths of towns which flashed a sudden signal from a golden window. If Stephen were here, he would identify them all, for he was a methodical man, he loved maps, names and populations, the height of this and the depth of that. But Laura looked vaguely at the spirit shapes of towns which could not possibly be urban communities containing cinemas and Wesleyan chapels and shops where the shopping women stood, dangling their limp, resigned baskets.

The little breeze fanned her cheek, the distant golden window — or was it the windscreen of a car? — flashed again. And suddenly she thought that she would speak to Stephen this evening, she would suggest that they might go away together for a little holiday. Since he had come home from the war, they had never been away alone together. Victoria, like the poor, was always with them, no longer conveniently removed by stout Nannie and produced again in the evening, clean and delicious in her little blue dressing gown with the pink rabbit on the pocket. He picked his way, poor Stephen, through a house littered with the navy-blue pools of little girls' gym knickers, lying still warm on the floor where Victoria had hopped out of them. Hideous contraptions of wire glittered on the bathroom shelf, seeming to grin at him when he went in to shave in the morning. Sorry! Victoria would say airily, palming the thing into her mouth and running down to practice. One, two, three, gahumphed the infernal "Water Lily Elves," while Stephen stood shaving, listening, visibly suffering.

He would have liked a son, Laura knew that. He loved Victoria, but he would have liked a boy; he bent to knock out his pipe in the evenings after the fiendish wireless had said its say, and sometimes, quite unconsciously, he sighed deeply. Perhaps in a queer sort of way he even missed the war, sitting there surrounded by his female household, knocking out his pipe. Ah, but we used to have such fun together, thought Laura in amazement. Sitting

eating those delicious little rum cakes while the stout piano and the thin violin shook the life out of Verdi, and the serious men bent over the chess-board, and flies settled on the newspapers on the racks. And little adventures, even, happening to them all the time. Being lost on mountains, stranded in godforsaken little villages smelling of snow and cow dung, but everything coming out right in the end, with hot drinks and a fire, a clean little wooden room like the inside of a cigar box, a great deal of laughter and always somebody enchanting to talk to, a woodcutter or a priest or a jolly woman making an omelette for them.

28

BUT suddenly there was no more fun, there were no more adventures, George Porter's blue eyes regarded a sofa, Stephen bent and knocked out his pipe, sighing deeply. If they could be quiet together for a little while, with a hill to walk on and a sea to swim in, might not something come back? For we are so lucky, so enormously lucky, thought Laura. Up here, in this clear rarefied light, their luck seemed immense. They were alive, they were all together. Sonia Peel, who had sat here like a large white tent while the planes clanged overhead, was now a widow; Desmond Peel had never seen the new baby. The oily waters had closed over Jim Trumper's red head. Laura's friends had left their husbands for someone else, or their husbands had left them for someone else. But here they were, the Marshalls, still a unit, still making sense in a world which every day seemed to signify less. Their wonderful, stupendous luck, thought Laura. Now that she had a free moment in which to stand back and look at it, it struck her as stupendous.

She began to plan. She would ask her mother to stay on, after the expedition to Mr. Briggs in Wimpole Street, and look after Victoria for a week or two. The house, she thought, feeling light-hearted already, could go to pot — absolutely to pot! Mrs. Herriot and Mrs. Prout would, she knew, conduct an embittered war to the death until her return, pitting the sniff delicate against the sniff insolent, pursuing Laura with endless dispatches from the battle front, of plaintive, voluminous letters and cryptic postcards, written with squared elbows at the Prout kitchen table. But let them fight, she did not care. It was as simple as that. Aunt Vi could stop and look after her father in St. Pol. He would grumble, but as long as the indispensable female figure was there behind the tea cozy, he would not really mind. The hens, the

ducks, the fine shades of the weekly shopping which had to be arranged so that she was calm and pleasant with Mr. Kellett, gay and rallying with Mr. Tubbs, the butcher — would her mother manage it all? But the idea had come to her, she refused to waver or be discouraged. Let them all fight, she thought, nothing matters but Stephen. And now I must go home, for it is certainly getting late.

She did not stir. The golden eye blinked again, far out in the warm haze. Yes, it was a car, for it was moving. She watched it half sleepily, listening to the hum floating up from the great bowl. It was the summer voice of England, seeming to say in the rattle of the haycarts, the swish of the blades laying sorrel and clover in swathes, the murmur and buzz of the uncut fields, the men's deep voices calling peacefully across the dead quiet, We are at peace. An aeroplane flew south, trundling along, flashing a silver blink to the gold blink below, and Laura watched it go as idly as she had watched the car crawl and dip along the unknown road. Planes were no longer something to glance up at warily. The long nightmare was over, the land sang its peaceful song. Thank God, thought Laura.

The feeling of thankfulness was so overwhelming that the view suddenly misted, gathered and hung shining, and she rummaged in her bag for her handkerchief. Heaven knows, she thought sarcastically, the fact should have registered before, she had had occasions in plenty to get her weeping done with official sanction. The fireworks had thrown their nests of squirming gold and silver caterpillars high in the air, the bonfires had crackled on the green and up here on Barrow Down. For a whole week, rich boozy brass voices had gone on beseeching everybody to roll out the barrel, assuring the silent woods and fields that there would always be an England. The young women had whisked their best dresses at a Victory ball, the young children had been gorged into fretfulness at a Victory tea, by Saturday victory was sour on everyone's tongue, as cold as the ashes of the bonfires. Let us give thanks, Mr. Vyner said, very simple, very quiet, when the handful of the faithful bowed their tired knees before God. But never, even then, had Laura felt quite this rush of overwhelming thankfulness, so that the land swam and misted and danced before her. She had had to lose a dog and climb a hill, a year later, to realize what it would have meant if England had lost. We are at peace, we still stand, we will stand when you are dust, sang the humming land in the summer evening.

Laura lay back again on the grass for a moment, only a moment, pressing her cheek against the

milky little flowers as she looked sideways, through half-closed eyes, down into the singing bowl. It must last for Victoria, the beautiful weather. And again the earth beneath her seemed to give its delicious half sway. I want a good deal for Victoria, she thought drowsily, but not the same things that my mother wanted for me. Nothing better than this. A quiet evening, a house and a child in the valley, time to climb a hill by herself. But it is only possible, she thought confusedly, if we are left alone, if the good weather lasts.

She slept.

29

VICTORIA MARSHALL approached her home. Laura's guess had been accurate. She was green on the seat and dirty on the knees, and she had also torn her blouse and lost a hair ribbon. She was extremely happy. In her hand joggled the music case, grown portly with a package containing cream cheese which Mrs. Watson at the last moment had crammed down between "Water Lily Elves" and "Little Gavotte." "Daddy will enjoy it for his tea tonight," Mrs. Watson had said. "They don't have tea, they have sort of dinner," Victoria had said gloomily, "but I'm sure he'll enjoy it all the same." Her own stomach felt tight as a drum. Tea at the Watsons' was a major event. Everyone came and sat down comfortably round the big table in the kitchen, Mouse, her two elder sisters, Maud, the chicken girl, and Mr. Watson if he was home. "Eat up, now," Mrs. Watson urged, piling buttery potato cakes on Victoria's plate, and there was more butter on the table, sometimes a little dish of cream as well, and a dark fruity cake, and saffron buns which melted in the mouth. Victoria, overeating with scientific greed, had thought enviously of Mr. Watson's Jersey cows even now standing in their stalls waiting to be milked, pretty as Siamese cats, their moist brown noses shining. Why, oh why, hadn't her father seen fit to own a farm? There sat Mouse, hardly eating a thing, used to it. "Yes, please," said Victoria to a third slice.

She leaned back, the girdle of her gym tunic pleasantly constricted. It was nice in the Watsons' kitchen. No wonder they preferred to sit here always rather than in the front parlor, a glacial apartment dominated by an upright rosewood piano, a fan of pleated pink paper ironically imitating flames in the glistening grate, and many photographs of wedding groups and Mr. Watson's prize cattle, looking not so very different. Bob's photograph was also there, in the place of honor on the

piano top under the plumes of dried pampas grass. Bob had been killed in the war, and Victoria thought it was a shame that he had been banished to the front parlor, past which even the animals, the cat and the old terrier, sheered in a hurry as they made for the fire and the shabby rag hearthrug. Today, of course, the fire was not so comforting. The door stood open into the cool flagged scullery, every window was wide, Mrs. Watson's forehead was flushed and shining. "Thunder about," said Maud, the chicken girl, lifting an arm as though it were a wing, and she a hen herself, and slowly, luxuriously scratching her shoulder.

"Come on," Mouse said in a low voice to Victoria, and off they went.

They scuffled about for a while in the granary and Victoria tore her blouse on a nail. Zip! The tear ran up her arm like a mouse. Then they went to look at the bull, huge, melancholy, a ring through his pink nose and a frizzled puff of white wool on his vast forehead. Victoria stood very still, staring, fascinated. How perfectly huge, how sad! "Catch," said Mouse, digging her in the ribs, and they tore away, squealing, kicking up their heels, rolling in the orchard grass. Exhausted, they lay there and told each other stories.

Victoria liked the way Mouse spoke, rolling, a little slurred in some of the sounds. What a dreadful accent that friend of Victoria's has! she had overheard her grandmother say, one day when Mouse had come to tea and Mrs. Herriot was staying with them. It's only Wealding, her mother replied — Victoria was outside the kitchen, where the two of them were working, covering jam pots. I rather like it, her mother had said, and Victoria, guilty but interested, heard the snap of an elastic band going round another jar of gooseberry jam. I do *not*, said her grandmother decisively, Victoria will be picking it up next, and her nice little voice will be spoiled. Everything so dreadfully *mixed* now, Victoria heard her grandmother mourning rather puzzlingly as she edged out of hearing. For half an hour she was self-conscious about her nice little voice. She was a frail flower. Then she forgot all about it until this minute. Dreadful accent, indeed! What rot they talked!

"I must go," she sighed regretfully, a couple of hours or so later. And here she was, plodding home, tired, extremely happy. There was a short cut across a field and through the churchyard. The iron gate clanged, and there she was among all the dead people. In this new part of the graveyard, there were rows of green tin cornets and jam jars, stuffed with tight bunches of roses and Canterbury bells, and the grass was neatly trimmed, and the

gravel was weedless, as though people were trying to soften the stern mystery and deny the pitiless rains with the homey touches of flowers and a snug turf eiderdown. The graves had almost a convalescent look. At any moment Hannah, wife of William, and Nathaniel, departed this life September, 1938, might sit up, push back the bouquets, and declare themselves a good deal better. Further on, the possessive love of the living had long ago died too, and the long grass and moon daisies waved round the anonymous wedded tombstones, heeling gently over together under the confetti of the Scotch briar petals. This part was really much nicer, thought Victoria.

At the church door she could not resist a peep inside. The empty church had the fascination of the shop seen through a window on early-closing day, its stands bare, its busy life arrested. Nobody was in the church, stealthy old Nobody, mouthing from the pulpit, lurking in the folds of the red plush curtain behind which Mr. Vyner kept his surplice. Stepping in here, after the warmth and buzz outside, was like stepping under the sea. At the far end of the dim green grotto, where angels or mermaids swam with their golden hair flowing, the gold cross shone steadily.

She tiptoed out very fast, closing the wire grille carefully after her, and when she was through the lych gate she began to run, the strands of her loosened pigtail flopping. Here was her gate, her familiar weedy gravel. She came in with a skip, noticing a tricycle pushed just inside the garage doors — so old Voller was here. Bursting with the burden of all she had to say, Victoria skipped up to the front door. It was locked. So was the back door, where the cat, plaintively waiting, greeted her with rapture. But there was always a spare key hidden under a flowerpot, which thieves were supposed not to lift, and Victoria let herself in, throwing her music case on the hall table, crying “Mummie!”

She ran through the kitchen, along the passage, into the hall, expecting at any moment to hear Laura’s voice answering Halloa, darling, from upstairs somewhere, perhaps from the depths of a cupboard where she was sitting surrounded by their old clothes, making one of her occasional ever ambitious raids of tidying up.

Silence. Nobody answered, frightening old Nobody, who had followed her back from church and now was taking possession of the empty rooms where a little clock ticked loudly and a bee buzzed wearily, wearily, against the glass. Laura was always there waiting, calling Halloa, darling! Now there was old Nobody.

30

STEPHEN MARSHALL let himself down into the seat of his car, outside Ashton station, with a grunt of relief. He threw his hat and the evening paper over his shoulder onto the back seat. The other men went by, finding their cars in the park. Some of them lived in Ashton itself, a horrible hole, a nice old town which had been ruined by a cancer of stockbrokers’ desirable residences, of Tudor cafés and Georgian banks and Assyrian picture palaces, so that now its only virtue was that you could leave it by fast train for London every half hour. A few of the men traveled up and down daily from homes in Bridbury; two or three, like Stephen and Hector Bellamy, came from even further afield.

There went Bellamy now, thought Stephen, pressing the self-starter. A remarkably handsome fellow, owning a pretty wife and a well-kept house and garden, wearing the right sort of tie, laughing on the right easy, friendly note, confound him. He had done extremely well in the war, and now here he was, planting his glossy shoes so confidently on the dusty ground, looking round complacently with his slightly prominent blue eyes as though he fully intended to do extremely well in the peace too. Every morning they traveled up in the same carriage, and Bellamy unfolded his copy of the *Times*, shook it out, and glanced along the headlines, faintly smiling, thoughtfully stroking his small clipped mustache, the picture of a well-tubbed, well-shaven, well-breakfasted man who was at peace with all the world. Here I am again, thank God, on the good old 8.47, Bellamy seemed to be confiding to his mustache. This is what I missed all these years, this is what I dreamed about.

And when the train ran into the dirty, echoing station, Bellamy would fish his bowler hat out of the rack and put it on his head, settling it deeply on his forehead as though it were a crown. He would fold the *Times* neatly under his arm, square his shoulders, shoot an impatient blue glance over the heads of the lesser men getting off the train in front of him, and off he would go to conquer London. Until this moment it had not occurred to Stephen that he envied Bellamy. To be so absolutely sure that you had got what you wanted, to have held tightly on to something for so long, and to find it waiting for you unflawed! Stephen began to edge out of the car park, and Bellamy, two cars away, raised his hand and called “So long, old man.” So long indeed, thought Stephen, braking to let one of the station taxis get past. Twenty years long, by his count.

Barring another major interruption, Stephen could think of no reason why he should not be traveling up on the 8.47, watching Bellamy sing his silent *Te Deum* to his mustache, for the next twenty years or so. The prospect filled him with two things — first, with dreadful gloom, and second, with surprise that he had done it for so many years already, but had only, this first summer of the peace, realized that the prospect filled him with dreadful gloom. There was not a thing to be done about it. But sometimes in the night — he was a poor sleeper — he would lie there imagining the most ridiculous things, seeing them selling the house, going abroad somewhere — Canada, Rhodesia, New Zealand? — seeing Laura in a print dress picking extraordinary blue and flame-pink trumpet-shaped flowers from a white picket fence, seeing a lot of young horses in a big paddock, and beyond them an immense stretch of lovely rolling gray country without a single smudge of smoke in the sky, and himself with an axe, cutting down something in the background.

It was all a dream, blurred, changing shape and color, and all the time he knew that it wasn't true, it would never be so. He would never leave England. He loved it too much. He would go on sitting opposite Hector Bellamy on the 8.47, and when it happened over again next time, there he would be, trapped, waiting to be overtaken by the final catastrophe which he had not had the wits to dodge. For it would remain just an idea to play with. Sometimes the house was white, sometimes it was built of wood, sometimes it was surrounded by orange groves watered by streams of melting snow running down from the mountains, and sometimes there was nothing but forests in which he would learn to watch the birds, like Edward Cranmer. But it did not matter. It was all just nonsense, for he would never leave England. He knew that perfectly well.

The traffic lights held him up in the High Street.

What a mess of a street, what a mess we have made of the whole thing, thought Stephen, but somehow he rather liked its typical English muddle and laziness this evening. He waited for the lights to go yellow, his hand ready on the gear lever. Two young girls went along on the pavement, off to meet their boys, probably at the Ashton Lido, for towels and bathing suits hung in their hands. He watched them idly. Were they fifteen or nineteen? Since he had been home, he had noticed that it was impossible to tell the ages of the young girls: they all had the same bright manes of hair, the same cool stare, the same mouth drawn in the same boring color on the same little round face. These

two girls wore cheap cotton frocks, short, probably shrunk with washing, and showing lots of bare leg. All right in summer, thought Stephen, to whom the unstockinged legs of the women of England, blue with December cold, splashed depressingly with mud as they scuffled after buses, had been one of the most unpleasant of the minor post-war shocks. But these little creatures had pretty sunburned legs and arms, and as they hurried along, chattering like birds, their long soft hair flopped gently up and down on their shoulders.

The taller of the two had bright red-gold hair, a wonderful color, burning and rippling. Glancing at the car as she passed, she caught Stephen's eye and gave him a collected, impudent smile. I know why you are looking at me, her smile said, I know, I know, and I am delighted by it. She gave a little flick to the white bathing suit she was carrying, and Stephen found himself smiling back. He twisted his head to have a last look at that amazingly lovely hair. She hastened away, away from him, a nymph fleeing back to the fountains and the uncut laurels. Stop! he wanted to cry to her. But she hurried along, not giving a damn, going to meet some wretched youth with a smooth face and a flat stomach, who would swim the crawl stroke the length of the Lido and hoist himself out, breathing as evenly as though he were stepping out of a punt. And suddenly Stephen realized that a car was hooting behind him. The traffic light had changed, there he was blocking the way, staring like a fool after a redheaded child. Good Lord! he thought, the beginning of the end. He made a screaming mess of the gear change and shot forward, turning to the left where the signpost pointed to Bridbury.

31

WHAT an evening, he thought. London had been infernally hot today. Miss Margesson's nose looked pinched and damp; when he went out to lunch the road gave slightly to the feet, sticky as warm toffee; the exhausts of all the throbbing buses and taxis rose on the glittering air and seemed to press down in a tight, acrid ceiling on St. Paul's huge dome and the sooty chimneys.

Sometime during the day he had thought, Why does one do this? He had suddenly wanted Laura to be there, so that he could ask her if she did not agree that it was supremely silly. But when he wanted to ask her something, she was never there, and when he got home she would be standing in the kitchen stirring something, a smudge of flour across her face which she would raise abstractedly to his

kiss. Yes, she would say, listening abstractedly, yes, darling, and suddenly an expression of anxiety would curdle her air of attention, she would whip open the oven door and snatch out some dish, planting it on the top of the stove with the sigh of relief of a runner tumbling into the tape. There seemed to be few of the old quiet moments for talking. All through their meal they would be jumping up and down. In the old days, food appeared before one punctually and pleasantly, an illusion produced with no creaking trap doors or flashing of mirrors, the digestion and the mind could work calmly together, but now there was always this infernal jumping up and down.

Perhaps Laura was not particularly clever about it. For he could not help noticing that the house was getting every day more and more like a last year's bird's nest beginning to crumble and fall away dustily from the eaves. Laura and old Prout did their best, no doubt, but gray fluff lurked under the beds; when he pulled out a book last night a pressed spider and a few strands of cordy, cobwebby stuff fluttered from between the pages. Oh dear, said Laura, but the trouble was that she did not really mind. Coming from the Herriot home, where the very silver seemed to form fours on the gleaming mahogany, she had the oddest Bohemian streak of not caring, of being quite prepared to perch happily as a bird among a mess which would set his own teeth on edge. And Victoria, his daughter, so obviously took after Laura in that way. She was hopelessly untidy.

Only this morning — he frowned — he had found the bathroom floor soaking wet, a damp towel thrown carelessly into the basin, and on the glass shelf, leering at him, the frightful wire thing which she wore round her front teeth. He stopped frowning, and he had to smile when he remembered the irritated yelp he had let out, and the cool, injured little way in which she had said Sorry, taken the beastly object, and scooped it into her mouth. The sideways flicker of her fair lashes, the way in which her glance had, for a second, taken him in from top to toe, standing there yattering in his dressing gown, was a sudden adult imitation of somebody else giving a quelling look to an inferior. Was it her grandmother, Mrs. Herriot? When he had gone away, she had been a towheaded baby clasping a yellow duck. Now she was a square little girl, watching him, summing him up from an already chosen position, already taking out of the funny box of inherited possessions the sort of adult family mask which later she would be able to adopt at will. There goes my daughter, he had thought, feeling helpless, positively helpless as he stood at the

bathroom door and watched her skipping downstairs and, almost directly, heard floating up from the unfresh stillness of the unopened room the hideously clear one, two, three of her determined practicing.

32

BUT Laura — he returned to Laura. Last night when they were undressing to go to bed, it had suddenly struck him how frightfully tired she looked. Outside the open windows the long summer twilight had come at last, bats whirled up and down against the glimmering green sky, some scent in the shadowy jungle garden, tobacco flower or stock, still floated up, faithfully sweet. "It looks like a fine day tomorrow," Laura said. She was sitting before her lighted dressing table, brushing her hair. She wore her old blue dressing gown, and she looked frightfully tired. He had caught sight of her reflection in the glass suddenly, sharp with the very slight distortion which a mirror gives. There she was, practically gray-haired at thirty-eight — why, he remembered his own mother, who must have been older than that at the time, with ropes and coils of dark hair almost without a gray hair. She had seemed younger, as he remembered, than Laura did now, when she used to have lunch in his rooms at Cambridge. He remembered her once on a hot day, wearing a coquettish little hat trimmed with white birds, and looking a rather prettier elder sister to the young lady who, for Stephen's benefit, had accompanied her. But his Laura, tired and gray — there she sat, brushing her hair and saying something about the hens. He interrupted her.

"I'm going to give you a new hat," he said. Of course it was a confused memory of his mother's coquettish white birds that had done it, but also there was a desire to give her something gay and frivolous, something new which she would put on and suddenly become Laura Herriot, the very tall, dreamy-looking girl in the water-green tulle dress, waltzing in the arms of someone in a pink coat. She is going to marry Philip Drayton, Connie Trehearne had told him as they rollicked round the room just behind the water-green tulle, but she had not, she had married him instead, to Mrs. Herriot's badly concealed disappointment. Thank God, he thought as he got into bed, thank God that Laura's mother, at any rate, has not descended on us lately. For he knew perfectly well that, in her subtle disparaging way, she blamed him for everything — for letting the European war happen, for letting Laura's hair go gray, for not being able to keep her in the comfort to which she had been ac-

customed, for growing middle-aged. All this, and more, Stephen could read into one of Mrs. Herriot's unuttered sniffs. Thank God, he had thought, that for quite a while she has been apparently lying low and minding her own business down in St. Pol.

Laura had put down her brush, stared, and begun to laugh.

"How sweet of you," she had said, "but, darling, I don't wear hats any more, except on Sunday. And I've already got my —"

"No," he had said firmly, "I shall buy you a new hat. Come up and lunch with me one day soon, and we'll choose it."

And today, on his way to lunch with someone at Boodle's, he had kept a sharp eye open for women wearing pretty hats. Extraordinary things they were, he thought, like tilted saucers filled with flowers, which their owners had perched above Britannic expressions of anxiety as though an infernal engine were ticking somewhere in the clouds of pale blue and white veiling. He tried, and failed, to picture Laura in any of these. But while he was looking across the street at one as he walked up St. James's Street, someone called his name, and there was Nigel Fox, whom he had last seen in 1943. Old Nigel, fatter and redder than ever — good Lord, said Stephen, he was tremendously glad to see him. It was true, he was tremendously glad, suddenly much happier, in some queer way, than he had been all day, or for days past. He could feel the mysterious lightness of his heart, the wonderful bounding of his spirits, just because he was standing beaming into old Nigel's red harvest moon of a face. It was a curious relief, as though suddenly there were nothing to explain, nothing to try and tell, because here was someone who knew it all. We know all about it, old cock, Nigel's grin seemed to say. And it seemed utterly ridiculous that he had not tried to get hold of him before! Utterly ridiculous! Where had he been all this time? Well, said Nigel, just around. Getting himself married for one thing.

"No!" said Stephen. "Not that dark girl, what's-her-name, Ruth? A nurse, wasn't she?"

"No," said Nigel, looking annoyed, not in the least that dark girl, what's-her-name, Ruth. Somebody very different. He explained.

"Bring her down for the week-end," said Stephen grandly.

"You're still down at — where was it? — Wealding, wasn't it?" Nigel asked.

And old so-and-so, and this name and that — they began walking aimlessly together, the wrong way for Stephen to go, as they talked. The day was amazingly lovely. The hot sunshine was de-

licious, the people went by looking happy and relaxed.

"Look here," said Stephen, "come and lunch. No, damn it, I forgot — I'm lunching with Baxter."

"I've got a date too," Nigel said, looking at his watch.

"Let's lunch next Monday," Stephen said.

But suddenly old Nigel became vague. He couldn't lunch on Monday. Wednesday — well, could he ring Stephen? He got out a notebook and took down the number. They would certainly lunch soon, or better still, dine, if Stephen would stay in town for the night. He wrote down the number very large and distinct, as though its largeness and distinctness ought somehow to reassure Stephen.

He smote Stephen on the shoulder. "Haven't changed a bit," he said fondly.

But it wasn't true of either of them. They were different. Evasiveness came down like a shadow over Nigel's crimson face, he tapped his breast on the spot where he had stowed away his notebook, cried "I'll ring you!" and lumbered off into the sunshine. Stephen had a feeling that he would never see him again. Stop! he wanted to cry to Nigel Fox as, this evening, he wanted to cry to the redheaded nymph fleeing away to her laurels. There was Nigel lumbering away from him, disappearing among the fine shaving brushes, the Chippendale bookcases, the fishing rods, the glossy boots, the Georgian bow windows of St. James's Street. He vanished, he was swallowed up. After a minute, Stephen Marshall went on to lunch with Baxter.

All the same, it lasted, the lightness of heart, in slightly diminished form right up to the evening. After lunch, it had seemed highly probable that Nigel would ring him up. They must lunch, they would dine, he would come down to Wealding to stay and bring the girl who was not in the least Ruth. The feeling that they would never meet again was nonsense. Tonight at dinner, thought Stephen, he would tell Laura about the meeting. She would remember old Nigel from his letters. There was so much to tell her this evening — Nigel, the preposterous hats in London, the way in which he had suddenly missed her in the middle of the long, hot day. Perhaps he might even be able to tell her that, if they stopped jumping up and down long enough. He found himself glancing from time to time at Barrow Down, the old hill towering over the fields and the little villages. An ice-blue shadow lay on its wooded lower slopes, giving its crown a look of Alpine loneliness and purity. How often he had thought of it while he was away, at all sorts of

odd moments. In some peculiar way it had come to mean England for him, and his love of England, which was the reason why he was stuck here waiting for the next big bang, if it ever happened, and why Laura would never pick vivid blue trumpets off the picket fence of a white house in a strange land. However he might feel in moments of gloom, that was the reason. And it was something which Laura would never really understand, bless her heart, for women loved people, things, places, but not an idea, a vague shape somehow embodied in one rabbit-tunneled old hill. He kept on glancing up at Barrow Down over the shag of wild roses and blackberry flowers. He must find time one day soon to get up there, to look at the view from the top. If ever I get a moment from the damned garden and the rest of the chores I'll walk up there, he thought.

He drove through Wealding. He looked at it affectionately, his village, the church, the little houses, men gardening quietly among the bean rows. He felt extraordinarily happy. When the car turned in at his gate, when he had backed it into the garage, just grazing old Voller's tricycle, he could hardly wait to get out and find Laura. He grabbed his hat and paper off the back seat and made off like an impetuous boy. The front door stood open. "Laura!" he called. Silence. The house seemed very still. A rug was pushed askew, a music case had been thrown on the hall table and had come open, showering loose sheets of music and what looked like a damp little brown paper parcel of something on the floor. "Laura!" he called again, but already the moment had been slightly flawed, her answer from the distant room or the far corner of the garden would not make up for the quite surprisingly sharp pang of disappointment. Yes, darling, he would hear her calling faintly in a moment, and she would come in, smiling, saying that she had had no idea, the vague creature, that it was quite so late.

Instead, Victoria said over the edge of the stairs, "She's not back yet." She came down towards him, step by step. "I can't think where she's gone," Victoria said. Collapsed, the moment hopelessly ruined and never to be revived, he stood in the middle of the hall staring up at her.

33

BY NINE o'clock Stephen was beginning to feel rather anxious.

His first impulse had been irritability. He gazed at Victoria and was struck by her extremely

disheveled appearance. Suddenly the lightness of heart started up by meeting Nigel Fox left him and he felt hot and tired, he knew that his first feeling had been right and that Nigel would not telephone. He dropped his hat on a chair and said to Victoria, "Oughtn't you to be in your bath?"

"I'm running it," she said, and he heard, far away upstairs, the splash of water running into the tub.

"She was going over to try and find Stuff," said Victoria.

"So she was. Well, she'll be back soon, I expect."

Victoria disappeared. He stood for a moment irresolutely looking round him, then he began to wander from room to room, as though hoping Laura had left a footprint or perhaps a message on the pincushion to account for her absence. The rooms gave no clue, but the air was close; he opened the windows, letting out a bee who was crawling anxiously on the drawing-room panes. Everything looked unnaturally neat — ah yes, it was old Prout's day to come and bang the carpet sweeper against the chair legs. She had plumped up the cushions on the shabby Knole sofa and had just slightly changed the position of all Laura's Staffordshire figures on the bookshelves, but had she —? He ran a finger along the top of the books and, as usual, brought it away grubby, and the lampshades looked gray. The room had been redecorated at a time when it was fashionable to have everything "off-white," a coloring which now sounded somewhat sardonic.

We ought to sell it, he thought, looking gloomily round. It's too big for Laura to manage, it's getting her down, and we'd never get a better price than we would now. Bellamy might like it. Only this morning in the train he had been saying that Hunter's Lodge was too small for them. The thought of Bellamy sitting here, crossing his legs and complacently fondling his little mustache, was oddly depressing. No, damn it, he thought, let's hold on a little longer and see if things improve. And it suddenly struck him as preposterous how dependent he and his class had been on the anonymous caps and aprons who lived out of sight and worked the strings. All his life he had expected to find doors opened if he rang, to wake up to the soft rattle of curtain rings being drawn back, to find the fires bright and the coffee smoking hot every morning as though household spirits had been working while he slept. And now the strings had been dropped, they all lay helpless as abandoned marionettes with nobody to twitch them. All the same, he'd be damned if he would sell the house to Bellamy!

He went down to the kitchen garden to see how that old fool Voller was getting along. The raspberries were netted all right, the jays were making an outraged squawking from the cherry trees, and the old man was hoeing at the far end beyond the asparagus bed. Stephen had meant to go along and shout one or two questions at him, but for some reason he stayed in the archway watching Voller, whose back was turned. The old man went on hoeing, very slowly, moving his spidery thin arms back and forth. He was bent as a thornbush, the back of his neck was earth-colored and seamed with deep lines and furrows, as though all the sorrows and cares of Voller's life had somehow gone to his neck. The sound of his hoe breaking up the earth was oddly soothing, the sight of him working away quietly in the lovely evening light gave Stephen a peaceful feeling, he could not have explained why. Why worry? he thought. All will be well. And yet he had not the faintest idea why looking at old Voller, scratching away like a patient old mole at a few square feet of England, should make him feel suddenly peaceful. All he knew was, he did not feel like breaking up the moment by bellowing into Voller's ear. He turned away, lighting a cigarette, and went back to the house.

Someone was moving plates in the kitchen. He went in quickly, saying "Hullo! You're back!" But it was Victoria, who must have bathed with extraordinary rapidity, and was now, in dressing gown and pajamas, bustling back and forth from the dining room.

"I've laid the table," she said, "and I've put something in the oven. It looks like fish."

She had the flushed and triumphant air all women wear when meeting the sudden emergency, as though drawing from it a mysterious source of pleasure. He looked at her respectfully.

"Thanks," he said.

"You won't have potatoes," she said, "I'm afraid there wasn't time."

"That's all right," he said meekly.

"Will you start?" she asked. "I expect you're awfully hungry, aren't you? Probably Mummie has popped in to see someone. You know what she is about time," she added with an amused, social manner — was it a gruesome echo of Mrs. Herriot again? Mesmerized, he followed her flapping slippers into the dining room. She had laid the table profusely, adding the silver candlesticks which they never used, several ash trays, and an empty sugar sifter.

"I do hope it's done," she said when they had taken the fish out of the oven and brought it into the dining room.

"It looks perfect," Stephen said.

She beamed.

"What about you?" he asked. "Aren't you going to have some with me?"

"I don't think so," she said, "I'll bring in a glass of milk, just to keep you company — I think there's some milk over. I ate such an awful lot at the Watsons'. Oh, Mrs. Watson sent you some cream cheese — it's on the sideboard." And there it was, looking small and damp in the middle of a huge plate.

34

VICTORIA, coming back with her milk, said suddenly, "Perhaps she met a bull."

"Who?" asked Stephen, startled.

"Mummie. I saw a perfectly immense bull today — it belonged to Mr. Watson."

She began telling him about the Watsons' farm. Her bath or the heat of her exertions had given her a damp, rosy look. She's going to be pretty, he thought, when she gets that damned coil of wire out of her mouth. He listened, nodding, thinking with amusement what it would be like to have a pretty daughter on his hands. Before they knew where they were, she would be a long-legged thing like that redheaded minx he had seen in Ashton, hurrying away, away, disappearing among the uncut laurels. She still looked very small, though, sitting drinking her milk at one side of the long table which they had bought in the old days when there were always people to dinner, people staying, never a minute to themselves. A long, positively patriarchal table. We should have had more children, thought Stephen, swallowing fish pie and looking round the empty places. Eight children, four boys, four girls. That is what we should have done, before the blighting weather set in which makes one worry to death over the future of even this solitary little object sitting licking milk off its downy upper lip. He would have liked a boy. It was locked up in his soul, he had never let Laura, even, suspect how much he would have liked a boy. But one worried desperately, desperately. All will be well, old Voller had mysteriously stated to the earth, bound in some ancient alliance in the greenish light between the asparagus bed and the tall hazels. But I don't know, I don't know, thought Stephen.

"Couldn't we," Victoria was asking, "have a cow, don't you think? Just one? She could live perfectly well in the orchard, if you made her a little house."

She was looking at him in suspense, hanging on

his answer. It was obviously of enormous importance. He pushed back his plate.

"Well," he said, "let's think. There's the milking of it, in the first place —"

He had not said no. He was discussing the question with her, in a gratifying, reasonable adult way. She seemed about to blow up, she turned so pink, and then she gave him a deep, soft look of love, so breath-taking, so utterly delicious that he felt he would promise her a dozen cows if she would often look at him like that.

"We could make our own butter," she said. "You could always have cream cheese like this." She scrambled up and set it before him with a flourish.

Afterwards, when she had gone up to bed, he began to feel just a little anxious. What on earth had happened to Laura? She had gone, of course, on that wretched old bicycle of hers. It had no brakes, it was obviously due to buckle up at any moment, he had told her only the other day that Jukes had got some perfectly decent new bikes down in the village. But she preferred to hang on to the old rattletrap, and now look what had happened, it had let her down. It had punctured or lost its chain somewhere in the maze of lanes at the foot of Barrow Down. That was the best that could have happened. At the worst, she was now lying senseless somewhere, in a ditch, crumpled up in a heap on the road. He would go out in the car and look for her, he thought. He went upstairs to fetch a new packet of cigarettes out of his dressing room, and was stopped by Victoria's voice calling him.

He went into her room.

"I've been sick," she said.

She was sitting up in bed, looking deadly pale.

"Hold on," he said, "I'll get a basin."

"I'm afraid it's too late," she gasped politely.

"Well, a — a sponge." He bolted from the room.

For the next few minutes he was very busy. Victoria leaned against him, her forehead was damp and glistening. He kissed it, and she sighed.

"I knew I'd eaten too much at the Watsons'," she said.

"I expect the heat had something to do with it, darling," he said.

She lay quietly, twiddling one of the buttons on his coat. She sighed again.

"I feel better now," she said.

"We'd better do something about your bed," he said.

What a day, he thought, rummaging about in the linen cupboard. He found clean sheets and a pillowcase, he brought them back and put them on

Victoria's bed, he hunted fresh pajamas out of the drawer and peeled her out of the old ones.

"Poor old baby," he said when he had got her tucked up again and she lay there, placidly watching him, the pink color already draining back healthily into her face. By this time he was the one who was feeling slightly queasy. He bent to kiss her.

"Don't go," she said.

"I must," he said, "I'm going to have a look outside the gate and see if I can see Mummie coming."

"You don't think anything's happened, do you?" she asked.

"Good Lord no," he said, mockingly reassuring.

35

SHE put out her arms and gave him a huge strangling kiss. She was only a baby after all, she believed things with beautiful ease. Then she fell back on the pillow, and he had a feeling that she would be asleep almost as soon as he was out of the room. He went along to the bathroom and washed his hands and fetched the packet of cigarettes. It was really not any good to go and see if he could meet Laura, on second thoughts, for there were two ways that she might come and they could easily miss each other. He went downstairs again and cleared away the supper things. The cat sat watching him, with that insufferable feline air of knowing everything, of being able to speak if it liked. He dumped the china and silver in the sink. He really could not tackle washing up tonight. And suddenly for the first time he thought of the gypsy fellow. Was he all right? No one knew very much about him except that he lived in the old railway-coach shack up on Barrow Down. If she's not back in half an hour, thought Stephen, I'll take the car straight up there and have a look around.

Perhaps later on he ought to ring up the Wealding police station. No, really, he thought, this is too farcical. Dodge, their policeman, was such a pompous old fool, cycling round the village very slowly as though the law were a steel ramrod stuffed down the back of his tunic. Stephen could imagine him coming to the telephone in the square red box of a police station, embowered in Dorothy Perkins roses and earwigs, and taking it all down slowly and laboriously in a black notebook. Larst seen at breakfast, eight-fifteen — ay — em — Ah, what nonsense, thought Stephen. For it was only a puncture, nothing but a puncture.

He went out again. He could not settle down to

anything. The evening was consolingly lovely, and he remembered that dusk, when there would be time to think of Dodge, was still some way ahead. In this last magnificent burst of light, people at the sea would still be bathing, the few remaining children would be trailing home along the sand dunes, lovers would sit hand in hand on the cliffs watching the fishing boat creep along the glittering pathway of the sinking sun. It was dropping fast, the sun, but it still showered the earth superbly with light, denying the watch on Stephen's wrist. Only a little owl spoke thinly, huskily among the trees, as though impatient for night.

He leaned against the fence. What could have happened to Laura? He felt suddenly irritable, he did not believe about the puncture, she had simply forgotten about the time, that was all. She was hopeless, absolutely hopeless! He remembered past occasions when she had forgotten the time and kept him waiting at railway stations, drinking lonely beers to while away the minutes in pub bars, kicking about one freezing winter day in Salisbury Cathedral, where he felt his toes turning cold as Saxon stone. Then she would drift in, smiling, unrepentant, explaining that she had just picked up a book, or started a conversation with someone, or followed a fascinating little street which had somehow led her a few miles out of her way. He absolutely shuddered to think how she and Victoria had got along while he was away. Meals on trays, all the clocks wrong, and the worst of it would be nobody would mind in the least. And suddenly he remembered the telephone bill which had been such a nasty shock at breakfast. Neither she nor her mother had the slightest telephone conscience. They would ramble away by the hour, without a thought of the appalling sum which in time he and the poor old Colonel would have to face. Laura had no idea of money. What an upbringing, he thought, for the kind of life in which we are all floundering now, and likely to flounder. She was really impossible!

But at the same time he knew that this was just a bluff put up to hide his growing panic. Without her, everything was dust and ashes. He knew that perfectly well, watching the ducks roll and pause and suddenly rear on end to explore with their beaks under a wing feather. When she came back —

for she must come, there was some perfectly ordinary reason for her absence — he would be so relieved that his temper might flare up, he might ask her angrily where she had been, giving them all such a scare, even to the point of thinking of telephoning Dodge. Or he might simply say, for once, that he loved her, that without her everything was dust and ashes. He did not know. The little owl called again. Soon it will be night, soon, soo-o-on. He straightened up and swung round from the fence so abruptly that the ducks, who had been exploring close to him, ran some little way before they felt emboldened to turn and watch him out of sight.

Stuffy's growl woke Laura. She sat up, feeling cramped, pushing back her hair. I must have dropped off, she thought guiltily. But for how long? She had no idea. Oceans of wonderful sleep seemed to have rolled over her, she had rocked and floated deliciously in endless caverns. The land had sung, she remembered that. She had heard it singing under her ear, pressed against the milky little flowers. Now she could tell from the deepening shadow, the wider glacier of cold blue which had slid down the slope into the valley, that it was really getting late. The great bowl below her was slightly misted over, and a fluff of beautiful pink clouds, a feather bed of flamingo down, hung in the sky. Good heavens! she thought in alarm. Victoria will have got home long ago, Stephen will have got home, they will be wondering what on earth has become of me.

She sprang to her feet, or tried to spring to her feet, but she was awfully stiff. She staggered and stood for a moment, her head spinning stupidly. I am glad I got to the top, she thought, looking dizzily down into the great misty bowl. But now she wanted to be down in it, to be part of it, to be home. She wanted to run in, calling their names, to find Stephen and say to him — what? Something that had come into her mind just before she fell asleep, though it did not really matter. She was feeling so extremely happy.

Stuffy was barking excitably, relieved that the long rest was over. "Come on then," said Laura, stooping to pick up her scattered belongings.

And she began to run down the hill.

(The End)

Accent on Living

This Month

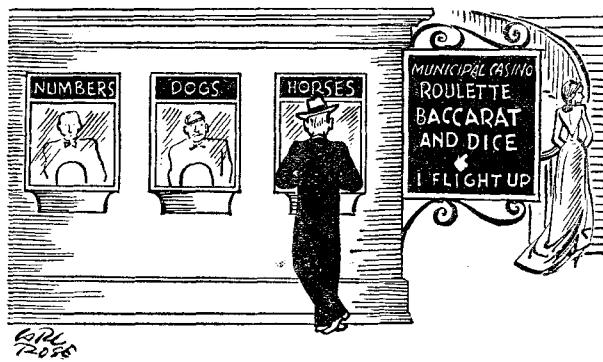
The Banco of which Ray Josephs brings tidings (page 102) seems to defy arithmetic itself. It pays 6 per cent on deposits, charges borrowers 3 per cent, and earns large sums for its proprietor, the city of Buenos Aires. I realize that such a Banco would be repugnant to the North American, who prefers to pay an interest rate of 24 per cent and up on his small borrowings and who gets 2 or 3 per cent — or more probably nothing — on his deposits. That is the way he wants it to be; otherwise it wouldn't be that way. Why a man who is hard up likes to pay more rather than less for a little "accommodation" I don't know, but such is plainly our national appetite, however lamentably these sound principles may be corrupted by backward nations elsewhere in the world. We will have none of your municipal Bancos, thank you, with their piffling charges and their ornate dividends.

I have picked up from bankers a good deal of information on the cost of making loans. It's very high, especially on small transactions. Thus, when a bank lends a man \$10,000,000, it charges him probably only around 1 per cent, or \$100,000. That, I judge, is about what it costs the bank to make the book entries, open and close the vaults and stow away the note and collateral, and pay the telephone bill. If the borrower is going to take on only \$1,000,000, the bank would have to charge him more — probably $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent — and even then it would be losing money on the deal, for a beggarly \$15,000 would hardly keep the janitors in brass polish, let alone cover the bookkeeping, vaults, et cetera.

The less one borrows, the more it costs. A \$5000 loan, at 6 per cent, is just so much good money down the pipe, so I'm told, from the bank's point of view. The bank is bound to make a few loans on that scale, to its pygmy accounts, but it is undesirable business any way you look at it — no more than a thinly disguised form of charity. As for a \$300 deal, with a first mortgage on the household furniture thrown in, a service entrance and third-class waiting room are implicit if not visible in the negotiations. Generally speaking, the person who needs to borrow as little as

\$5000 or \$300 is profligate or dishonest anyhow, the bank reasons. If something weren't wrong with him, he'd be carrying a bigger line.

I see no future for the Banco Municipal de Préstamos, in the light of all this, but if not a municipal bank, why not at least a municipal casino? The casino would merely present openly, under public control, a substitute for the national gambling activities now vested in race tracks, barbershops, cigar stores, curbstone operators, state legislators, and city officials. The casino would offer dice, bingo, roulette, baccarat, boule, and black-jack; it would accept wagers of all kinds on sporting events, even on basketball games. There would be no horses to feed, no police to bribe, no jockeys to rule off the turf — not even, for that matter, any turf. The great responsibility of keeping the world supplied with



thoroughbred horses would revert, where it belongs, to the U. S. Cavalry. The public department of the nation's gamblers would be far more seemly: no longer involved in a criminal enterprise, they would not have to be so extremely hard-boiled about it. With a gypsy orchestra sawing away and the occasional pop of a champagne cork, the whole crowd would soon be acting like characters in an E. Phillips Oppenheim novel and the city would be making money in carload lots. If all went well, the casinos could become distributing points for a state lottery. Aside from its legality, the main difference between this lottery and the baseball and number pools would be that the big winners would actually be paid the prize money due them.

I once waited through three races in a cigar store on New York's West Forty-sixth Street. The room was small, hot, crowded, and two uniformed policemen on duty were bellowing, "Keep moving, folks." The behavior of the patrons, identical in each race, was as follows: —

Milling around dejectedly, each client held a betting slip; a telegrapher was calling out the proceedings. "They're off," he droned, "and it's Grandpa's Spells in the lead, Abbas Dabbas second, Grouch-

bag third, and at the turn it's White Mule by a head. . . . And now at the half it's White Mule, Grandpa's Spells, Grouchbag — and White Mule is still leading as they come into the stretch. And at the finish it's Pin Head, Round Steak, and Abbas

Dabbas — Pin Head the winner." At precisely this point in all three races, each happy devotee of the Sport of Kings, to a man and in perfect unison, tore up his betting slip, threw it on the floor, and remarked, "Ah, hell."

C. W. M.



My First Alarm By WALTER M. GIBB

I AM all aglow about my first discovery of a fire, but there are moments when I wish that the blaze had been discovered by someone else. I imagine the fire department feels a little that way about it too, but just doesn't want to make a scene.

I came upon this fire indirectly, by way of our back porch. There was a worn step in our porch stair that had bothered me for upwards of two years. Saturday seemed like a good time to replace it. So I measured the thing and started up York Road in search of a step store or its equivalent.

I was very happy then, even making a song of sorts out of the step's dimensions: "O ho for a board that is thirty-two, by nine and three-quarters, by one or two, O ho, yoo hoo" — that kind of thing.

Finally, after many choruses, I came upon a place that advertised woodworking. The door was locked, however, and peering through the window I could see nothing but an uninteresting display of house paint. Still O-hoing and yoo-hooing, I walked around the side on the chance the fellow might have a workshop in the rear, perhaps even a lumberyard with my board and himself in it.

And there I saw it — my first fire! Mine, that is, by cognition rather than ignition. The actual blaze, I assumed, belonged to the proprietor of that little establishment, and I only wondered, as I watched it, why he had chosen to build it on top of his cellar door.

I wondered too why he wasn't there to enjoy it; it was lively and pretty and had a nostalgic campfire fragrance. It did not impress me offhand as the variety of fire that needs putting out, but that may have been because no firemen were present. Just a pleasant crackle and dance of flames along a sloping cellar door.

The flames hadn't quite reached the clapboard building wall. I was idly wondering how long that would take, when it occurred to me that here was a problem which should not be allowed to reach a solution.

Alas, that was substituting for a simple mathe-

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matical problem a most complex social one: namely, how to summon the hook and ladder. For me it was tantamount to leaping from the fire into the frying pan.

To begin with, there was no alarm equipment. That struck me as paradoxical, for I recalled the case not long ago of a man who failed to turn in a fire alarm because he could not read the instructions on the box; here was I with a fire and a college education, and there wasn't so much as a participle dangling from a hatchet anywhere. You know the type of literature I mean — the framed directions on display in depots, hotel lobbies, and doctors' waiting rooms, reading: —

Break glass to get axe, use axe to open fire alarm box, lift receiver from hook, pull lever down, and invert can. Violators will be punished by a fine of not less than \$1000 and imprisonment up to and including ten years, or both.

But if there was no alarm box, at least there was a fire station itself less than two blocks away, and I set off for this at a dogtrot.

It was a calm, sunny afternoon, quiet even on York Road. Fluffy, white non-smoke clouds floated overhead, and in the whole world not another soul seemed hurried or anxious. In the still, peaceful air I could hear, as I trotted along, a small voice saying, "Look here, Gibb, they aren't going to believe you. Nobody goes to the fire station to report a fire. Pull yourself together."

Need I say that by the time I reached the station I was scarcely of a mind to report anything? But one does not walk into a place of that nature to say, "How do you do?" or "What's cooking?" So I did what the little voice had suggested. I pulled myself together first, then made my entry as dignified and businesslike as befitted the seriousness of my mission.

It was less of an ordeal than I had anticipated. Half a dozen relaxed fire-fighters were discussing baseball and they made no great to-do over my arrival. A seventh was seated at a desk in one corner apparently making out a report, and he paid no special attention to me either.

The man at the desk was the only one wearing a hat, and although it was a sorry excuse for the peaked fire helmet I had been brought up to expect, it was nonetheless official-looking and decided me in his



favor as the one who should hear my report. Moreover, the desk itself contained a fascinating array of clockwork and telegraph equipment, and this I had the opportunity to examine at close quarters while awaiting an acknowledgment of my presence.

Finally, however, I felt obliged to attract attention by clearing my throat and saying, "Pardon me." The man in the hat looked up then, asked me what was on my mind, and promptly resumed his paper work without waiting for an answer or offering me a seat.

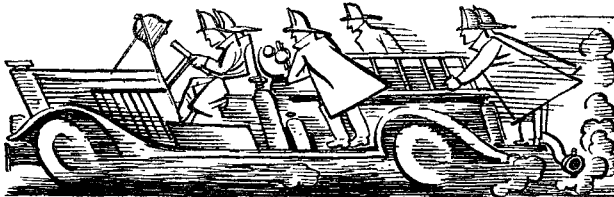
I suppose that in the course of his career as liaison man between a disaster organization and a distressed public he has learned that dispensing with the customary formalities goes a long way to relieve embarrassment. Some persons are painfully shy. In my own case, although I am more accustomed to the amenities than otherwise, I must confess I found that his nonchalance made my chore easier.

Without so much as introducing myself, therefore, I began at once to tell him about having to replace a worn step in our porch stair, and how in my search for a place to buy the required board I had discovered a likely establishment, just a couple of blocks away on York Road, advertising woodworking, only to find that the door was locked, so that —

But there he interrupted me by pointing to one of the other men (his superior, I imagine) and saying, "Tell it to him!"

"The gentleman with the white hair?" I inquired.
"That's right."

The individual indicated was easy to pick out, not only by his hair but also because at that moment he was being the life of the firehouse. Judging from the



attentiveness of his audience, whatever anecdote he was telling must have been unusually good, and of course I permitted him to finish it. He in his turn was equally polite to me as I told him about the step that had needed replacing for a couple of years, my decision to do the job today, it being Saturday, and so on.

He did not once interrupt me and even nodded sympathetically now and again. But at the very end when I said, "And the whole cellar door was on fire," he jumped almost straight up in the air and called upon God.

For the next few seconds I was like a safety island in a busy intersection. But for seconds only. It seemed like no time at all before I became a forlorn buoy in a deserted sea.

The room emptied faster than if someone had shouted, "Fire!" Through a door I caught a glimpse of men pulling on rubber boots, and the next instant the station itself moved backward like a wharf at shipside. The huge red and white truck had begun to roll.

Riding the rear step was my man in the hat.

"Could I be of any further assistance by going along?" I started to ask.

"Write down your name and address!" he shouted, pointing back to his desk, which was now ringing and rattling throughout its clockwork. And before I could ask why, he was gone.

I did as he had suggested, however, and then went back to my fire. This time it looked like the real thing, with hose lines, a crowd, and all. But now I could not see the nice old blaze itself because the firemen wouldn't allow anyone to go around back.

So I just stood in the fringe of the crowd out front. In a moment of excusable pride I mentioned to one of the other onlookers that *this* fire was *my* discovery. He nodded and walked away.



Return

By ELFORD CAUGHEY

SWIFTLY the mouse-colored miles flowed under the tires
And farms slipped away, drowned in a whirlpool of fields and hills.
Trees swarmed down slopes to lean over fences and shake their bronze heads
at our speed.

The bustle of telegraph poles bound together with wires
Was a scourge to go faster; even the flying sun
We left snarled in the branches of a towering pine
To the west. The car motor hummed and roared, answering our need
For swiftness, and the cleft wind beat on our faces like splashes of wine.
We might have been fleeing the clutches of Death in an effort to borrow
One imperfect hour cast off by the spinners of time for Eternity.
Then down the last hill we sped into night
Toward the glittering stars of the city —
And a quiet dark street, home, and a welcoming light.

People's Banco

By RAY JOSEPHS

WHEN the *Señor Representante* from the Banco Municipal came to see Estella about "la Singer," we thought the ultimate in our second maid's complex affairs had come. The conversation which ensued from below stairs in our Buenos Aires house was, to say the least, spirited. There were scattered words available through the door: "production," "interest," "depreciation." When, after exchanges of mutual regard, the *Señor Representante* was gone and Estella emerged with a fistful of pesos, her precious sewing machine, and talk of a new side-line business, we were completely baffled.

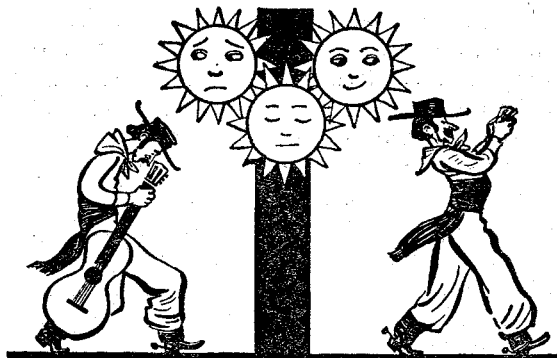
It was only weeks and conversations later, when Estella announced that "la Singer," — Buenos Aires *porteño* for sewing machine, — which had never left the house, was once again completely hers, that I got around to investigating the Argentine bank which sounded like a pawnshop. I found that it not only combined the best features of both but was, at the same time, a beneficial society and civic improvement league, art foundation and musical institute, department store and specialty shop.

Estella's transaction was typical. On an average, the Buenos Aires Banco Municipal de Préstamos (Municipal Bank of Loans) has cash out on 15,000 sewing machines. But knowing that the *porteños* of Latin America's leading city pawn them only as a last resort or, as in Estella's case, when money is needed to buy cloth to run up into items to be sold, it feels secure leaving them in the borrowers' homes. They are picked up only when interest payments are not met.

Helping Estella get her raw materials and aiding her to sell the finished product to pay off her loan are free Banco services. Having decided in 1878 that, the free-spending Latin temperament being what it is, there comes a time in the life of every man, woman, and child when a few extra ready pesos without embarrassment are important, the Banco's founders deliberately set out to create a loan institution that would help rather than harry.

Porteños frequent the Banco as citizens here might patronize the First National. And they get even better treatment whether borrowing or buying. The minimum loan is a peso (about 25 cents, U.S.), the maximum, \$50,000; average items bring about 40 pesos. On small loans the Banco, disproving the pawnbroker's heart-of-ice tradition, often generously tosses in a peso or two out of its own pocket. The interest charge is a modest 3 per cent.

Born in Philadelphia, RAY JOSEPHS attended the University of Pennsylvania. He worked for ten years on the *Philadelphia Bulletin* and went to Latin America in 1940 as correspondent for the *Marshall Field Syndicate* and *Variety*, the film and theatrical weekly.



Jewelry is the greatest single item, and it occupies the greatest attention of the 1400 employees at the Banco's main office and six branches. When you bring in an item, you are shown to a small closed booth. A runner takes the ring, pin, or whatever it is, to an appraiser. To prevent collusion — or embarrassment and haggling —

pawner and appraiser never meet face to face. The price is written, you accept or refuse, and that's that. On larger items, which can't be brought in, you can, as in Estella's case, simply call up from the free phones available everywhere in Buenos Aires and have a *representante* or board of appraisers come out for a look to fix the value.

So skilled and fair are the appraisers that some have written books on their specialties and have been consulted by libraries, museums, and governments throughout the hemisphere, especially on first editions, autographs, and guitars. All are highly paid and especially schooled, and there has been only one scandal in Banco history involving fraud between appraiser and borrower.

As long as interest is paid annually you can keep your goods from being offered for sale. One woman left a piano for more than twenty years; others have left items for ten and fifteen years, regarding the Banco's modern, fireproof vaults as the best storage place in Buenos Aires. The practice is discouraged, but nothing can be done about the horde of men about town who, having lost at the week-end races, come in promptly every Monday morning with their binoculars. On Saturdays, pay envelopes in hand, they redeem them for another try at Palermo or San Isidro, the great Buenos Aires tracks which run all year round.

Another regular was a laundress who pawned her customers' shirts each Monday and had an astonishing run of luck on the Friday lottery until she finally lost. Unable to get the shirts back in time for Saturday delivery, she broke down, turned her ticket back to her customers, and explained that they'd have to get them out themselves. The Banco refused her business thereafter.

Pawners come from all classes. Many people have pawned diamonds — the Banco has loaned as much as 120,000 pesos (or \$27,600) on a single gem. Women are likely to bring in wedding dresses, for there is no traditional sentiment for them. Wedding rings, men's and women's, are rarely pawned, however. Mourning garments are plentiful, since the wearing of black for as much as six months to a year after the death of even a distant relative is common.

Because the Banco lends on almost anything, it has built up an amazing assortment of goods — building supplies, fine silverware, baby carriages, lamps, electrical equipment. Office furnishings and small print-

ing presses are also available in seemingly unlimited quantities; Argentines are quick to go into any new business at the drop of a sombrero; and a *porteño* saying has it that whenever two unoccupied Buenos Aires *cabelleros* get together, the chances are ten to one they will start another newspaper.

The Banco has had loans on as many as 10,000 guitars, 5000 pianos, and 5000 desks at a time. Washing machines, electric toasters, vacuum cleaners, are all rare, for there are comparatively few such imported items in Latin America. But the Banco could stock anything from a one-room flat to a cattle-raising *estancia* without too much trouble. And since the Banco also makes loans on property and has a big mortgage department, you might be able to get the apartment or ranch itself as well.

The ultra-modern, six-story Casa de Ventas (Sales House) of the Banco resembles a Fifth Avenue department store, except that its typically Argentine use of clean line and glass brick makes it look even more up to date than most Manhattan shops. Beautifully lit and decorated show windows line a block-long arcade. A series of displays offers a complete home, down to the baby's crib. A living room is tastefully furnished with period objects, all matched with care by professional designers. A kitchen is complete down to items in the pantry. Other windows show radios and musical instruments, luxury furs and clothing, motorboats and fixtures. Inside, departments are grouped and arranged as in a fine store — clocks and jewelry near the front, clothing on the second floor, furniture and antiques on the third, machinery, cars, heavy items in the basement.

Wide aisles and spacious elevators invite browsing. Salesmen have been carefully trained to point out bad as well as good points. Since the municipality does not run the Banco merely for profits, its theory is that the customer, as well as the borrower, should get every possible break.

Special sales are on a regular schedule: furniture on Fridays, musical instruments on Tuesdays, and so on. Ads in *La Prensa* and other newspapers keep Buenos Aires advised on specials. The bidding itself, conducted in one of the several large amphitheatres in the Banco's Casa de Ventas, is one of the best free shows in a city whose 3,500,000 people keep thirty theaters going in season.

If you want to bid and cannot attend in person, a ghost bidder acts as your agent, paying up to the maximum you have previously set. The auctioneer does not know your price, and the ghost bidder tries to get the article for you as cheaply as possible. The charge for each service is less than five cents. If the price obtained for the article is above the amount loaned, the Banco merely

deducts its interest and service charges and returns the rest to the borrower.

Once a year the Banco looks over its stock of unredeemed winter clothing and blankets and then conducts a lottery to determine which outstanding notes it will cancel. Holders of lucky numbers are notified to come in and pick up their goods with the Banco's compliments. Like all mortgage-issuing Argentine institutions, the Banco also holds semiannual drawings to determine which clients will have mortgages paid up out of a reserve fund and publicly burned.

Despite the small percentage of profit, the *porteño* habit of overspending and buying on installments has given the Banco such a remarkably large business that it has never required a subsidy and has, in fact, become a prime source of municipal revenue. In addition to building its own imposing headquarters, it once loaned Buenos Aires \$5,100,000 to pave streets; it frequently lends provincial cities cash for water plants, highways, and other improvements.

Another odd project of the Banco has been a scholarship fund for young musicians and a fellowship institute for artists. Finding so many talented painters forced to pawn their canvases and so many budding musicians bringing in their instruments, Banco authorities began to give them special attention. Today the Banco's special committees select the country's likeliest talents, underwrite their work, education, and progress, and provide imposing galleries and recital halls in the Banco Building for public exhibitions and presentations.

By stressing that its storerooms were already overcrowded with copies of European painting — long dominant in imitative Argentina — the Banco has encouraged a truly indigenous art and music, and has developed talents which might otherwise have gone begging. Profits also provide for close to one hundred other scholarships and fellowships ranging from high school courses to postgraduate studies. The winners are often outfitted from head to foot from the Banco's own ample supplies.

Free dining rooms and maternity clinics have also been set up in poorer neighborhoods; the tuberculosis ward of the Muñiz Hospital and the operating rooms at the Hospital Piñera are Banco gifts.

Recently the Banco established a savings bank for the public, paying an interest rate of 6 per cent and encouraging its regular pawning customers to save everything possible. When I pointed out to Banco officials that such a step might eventually end the need for pawning, they appeared to be unconcerned. "So long as there are people in Buenos Aires," they said, "our job will go on. For the *porteño* is like everybody else who needs a little money — only here we understand him."



FOOD

Sauce for the Gander

By ANN LEIGHTON

FOR, what is love, thought Mrs. Heath, stirring her sauce carefully over a low flame as the teacher had told her to do. Or marriage. And she looked at the woman next her, browning a small, plump chicken.

But whether women ages ago had reserved to themselves the magic of cooking, or whether men had imposed it upon them among domestic chores, not realizing its special potency, she really could not decide. In the long, slow game played between the sexes, choosing out the special burdens and privileges, sometimes one sex had won and sometimes the other. When civilization had begun to be interesting, women had somewhere managed to establish themselves as the weaker sex. Clever of us, thought Mrs. Heath, seeing a tapestry of primitive women still bending in fields the world over. But everywhere men had bagged the things most amusing to do — all the things that would take them out and away. And they are still going, she thought. Whether war and business are really any more wearing to body and spirit than tending fires and children is women's doubt; but everyone knows which is most interesting.

Yes, she said to the teacher, it is coming nicely.

Men like to be mended, she thought, but not more than anything else, and clean, though not very. But in either state they are not interested in its mechanics. The little woman with her needle, the slim figure with the broom, never awaken passionate admiration after the first few days of domesticity. Respect. Tenderness. But who wants respect and tenderness, thought Mrs. Heath, if she can have anything else. Probably in danger and far away — in great danger and very far away — a man's heart might leap to the vision of the head bent over his socks, the arm raised to sweep; but near by, in easy reach, these are not certain lures. Men have even persuaded woman that the ideal in housework is not to be seen in the act, not to be heard in the chronicle. Men plan so well for their own comfort and entertainment, she thought, even to inventing machines to help the women work and keep them beautiful.

Men saw far ahead long ago, she thought, when they rushed from the cave to hunt and hack, leaving the women to brush up the bones, tend the fire, spread fresh boughs. A dead animal on a man's shoulder is as showy as any peacock's tail. Even today women love men holding out a bit of meat, a piece of fur. But when he asks, What have you done today, dear? and it is merely, Brushed up bones, tended the fire,

ANN LEIGHTON is an American housewife who flourishes with her family on the New England coast. Her first book, *While We Are Absent*, spoke eloquently for those Army wives who carried on alone for three years at a stretch. Now that her Colonel has returned, she is practicing that old adage, "The way to a man's heart . . ."



spread fresh boughs, the response leads nowhere worth the journey.

But they left us the cooking, she thought, and lifted the wooden spoon to see if the sauce had started to coat it. They carelessly left us the secret — or did they never know it? A few fresh leaves fallen into the pot, or a bit of something rubbed into the raw flesh where it fell, and he began to bring her the largest pieces, to wait to eat with her and rest afterwards. Perhaps all romantic love began with what woman learned to do with fire.

Yes, she said, it is beginning to thicken.

Because, she thought, the old anatomical saw is really true, like so many old saws. The way to a man's heart — And here we all are taking it — all these women of different shapes and sizes and ages, removing their rings to get their hands into the dough. Trying to learn how to make something wonderful without all the materials — like would-be ballet dancers or show ponies training in weighted shoes. Preparing for a glamorous future. At least we all look contented and assured, she thought. The way back is evidently not through the stomach.

Yes, she said, it is nearly ready.

For behind each of us learning to cook superlatively stands a man. The teacher knows, she thought, looking up to see the regal figure, clear-skinned and full-bosomed, like a priestess initiating the devotees among the plumes of fragrant steam. The magic rites. The ancient way. And what would you like to learn today, she asks, but she always has the right ingredients ready — for the woman with the Spanish name, the woman with the English husband, the woman whose husband raises pheasants. The engaged girl is taking the whole course, because she cannot know yet what he likes as he is still on a far island. But he is here with us too, thought Mrs. Heath, hearing her husband say, This really is a sauce.

For it is not servant problems that bring us to this superb cooking school, she thought. This is not what one can ever hire anyone to do for one. As soon entertain a concubine as a woman who can cook as we hope to.

Of course, she thought, this spoils us — for all sorts of things we have enjoyed, or endured, until now — for eating out in most restaurants, and for even the kindest ignorance in the kitchen. And for all the tales by glittering epicures whom queens have begged for dishes learned from sheikhs. For these last, these glamorous good-eaters, she thought, are merely left-over cavemen sorry to have let the charm slip from their hands. Let them go out to kill or plant now, she

thought, something for us to cook later; but let them stay away from our fires. For women do not really love men for their cooking. Whereas men —

The sauce is done. Perfect. He will love it. And me.

Dismissed, the class filed upstairs into the restaurant. And there was a crowd already by the door, waiting to eat well. For the teacher would now stand and cook beautifully for all to see, and there were men waiting to watch her stir something slowly over a flame, for them.

Do men gather outside windows where women mend invisibly, asked Mrs. Heath as she put on her hat. Or watch cleaning demonstrations? But let a woman cook proudly and easily, and here they all are — the intellectuals with, No clippers, please, to the barber, and the genial baldheads who have to wipe the mist of pleasure from their spectacles to see more clearly the woman stirring slowly over a low flame.

The class filed out of the door, aprons under arms, balancing in their hands their special charms, their spells. And behind each one, thought Mrs. Heath taking care not to spill her sauce, goes the archetype husband, the lover, the hungry male.

Our Doubting Landlord

By ELINOR GOULDING SMITH

IN THESE turbulent months of peace, our home has gradually taken on a new and confusing appearance. There is, in its furnishings, an evident struggle taking place. The post-war world is beginning to show in spots, alongside pre-war relics, giving the house an air of being unable to decide between the modern new shiny world of steel and plastic, and a sloppy, well-worn old one of scratched wood, frayed fabrics, chipped china, and dingy peeling paint.

Slowly, one bit at a time, we have been trying to replace the things that wore out, broke, tore, or just disintegrated during the years of closing our eyes to the slow decay.

Replacing the battered percolator is a shiny new glass coffee maker with plastic trimmings, which makes me feel like the Mad Doctor every morning when I make the breakfast coffee. I always expect, when I use it, either that a genie will emerge from the bubbling brown brew that rises mysteriously to the top half of the pot, or else that I shall slowly become transparent and then disappear altogether to lead a strange disembodied and invisible existence. Unfortunately, the beautiful new glass coffee maker stands on the stove which the landlord bought fifteen years ago in one of his more violently Silas Marnerish moods and has never seen fit to replace. The oven door has warped to the point where the cake stays raw while the wall beside the stove turns a beautiful

golden brown, delicately crusted and all ready for the icing.

I take the coffee itself, vacuum-packed in a glass jar, from a refrigerator which was an early experimental model in the first days of artificial refrigeration, and which the same landlord bought at a discount when the manufacturers discarded it as unworkable. Perhaps, though, I am not being altogether fair: by now there is little of the original refrigerator left, bit by bit having gone the way of all refrigerators, a hairpin here replacing an essential wire, an old nail file there replacing a necessary bolt. The grill that hid the works has long since been discarded. Yes, it was unfair — one can no longer say that it is the same refrigerator.

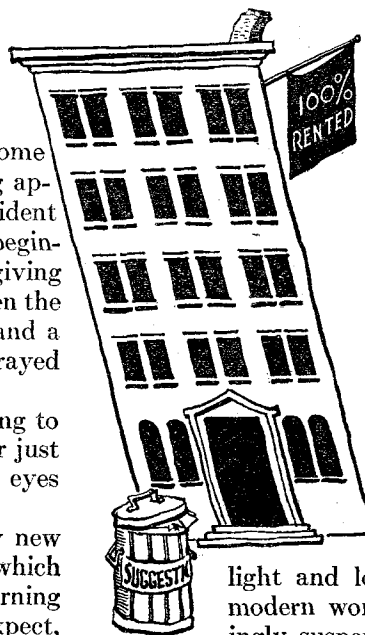
I write now on a beautiful new typewriter with a crackle finish to protect my eyes from any harmful glare. I can change my margins or set the tabulator with a flick of a finger instead of having to climb over the top and do things upside down in the back, and I sit at the Finger-Flow Keyboard and the forty-four controls like the pilot of a DC-6. However, when I sit at the new typewriter, I must still sit in an awful draft, because one of the windowpanes at my right has a big hole in it, and our landlord, a cautious man, seems to feel that it might be foolish to replace it at

this time. It may be, he thinks, that in the next two or three years the price of glass will go down.

The desk and typewriter used to be lit haphazardly from the living-room window, and on gray days we just strained our eyes and hoped our touch typing was more accurate than we knew it was. Now, clamped to the back of the desk, and soaring up in an incredible steel structure, is a Dazor Floating Fluorescent Lamp, which casts on the Finger-Flow Keyboard of the typewriter the brilliant cold

light and low watt consumption of the modern world. The lamp is breath-takingly suspended from about five feet of metal tubes, springs, elbow joints, universal joints, sockets, bolts, wing nuts, and God knows what else. Wherever you place it, it mysteriously stays, suspended but unmoving, really putting light where you want it, and making the rest of the lamps in the room look like props for a Technicolor movie of the Civil War.

However, this world-of-tomorrow lamp gets its electric current from an outlet which bristles with a complex arrangement of double sockets, triple sockets, quadruple sockets, and old extension cords. This condition is making our insurance company old before its time, not to mention us. Our landlord



ELINOR GOULDING SMITH is a New Yorker whose work has appeared in several issues of the *Atlantic*.

seems to have felt, back in the thirties, that with the state of the world so unsettled, it would be foolish to spend the money for more than one outlet to a room. Now, with prices high, he feels it would be unwise to make any important changes in the building.

Next to the tin can full of pencils — a tin can that dates back to the days before we took to flattening cans out neatly after eating their contents — stands a new pencil sharpener in a soft green finish guaranteed to be easy on the eyes. This pencil sharpener is securely bolted to the desk and has numerous holes for the insertion of pencils of different sizes. It somehow stops itself when the pencil is sharp, sternly refraining from the practice of previous pencil sharpeners of happily chewing away the entire pencil while you wondered if it was done yet.

While you sharpen pencils in this wonderful little machine, it is hardly possible to avoid seeing the window sill. Other people's window sills are made of wood. Ours are made of plaster, and are obviously the result of an experiment that failed. Plaster, judging by our sills, is not in the least resistant to moisture, sun, occasional steam heat, or soot, and our window sills bear a strong resemblance to certain parts of New Mexico. Our landlord, a penurious fellow, readily admits that the plaster sills were a bad mistake, and suggests that we hire a carpenter to cover them with wood.

An Early American cupboard with hand-carved doors that are only a *little* warped, and for which we may one day find a bit of hardware that we could easily use as a knob, houses the rubber cement, the half-empty India ink bottle, the window spray, the penknives, the thumbtacks, the old paintbrushes, the leather dressing, the 3-in-1 oil, and the protractor for which no one has found any use.

Beside it stands the new stapling machine. This machine, a colossal mass of steel, we bought yesterday to replace the ailing and rusted instrument which for years faithfully mended shoes, did emergency sewing jobs, fixed window shades, upholstered upholstery, and lined overcoats. The new machine, instead of having staples in it, has somewhere inside its gray steel body a coil of wire from which it makes its own staples as it goes along. When you press the big black plastic lever, gears inside mesh, and cogs trip and springs snap, and the machine chews off just the right length of wire, folds it into the proper shape, inserts it in the papers, and bites it firmly closed. However, when my husband wanted to shave this morning, I had to heat water in a kettle on the stove because something seems to be wrong with the hot water, and our landlord, a frugal man, feels that if we wait a few days the handy man may figure out what is wrong, and then he won't have to call in a plumber or boilermaker after all.

In the bedroom we rest our heads on new all-down pillows, but the paint on the ceiling floats gently down in big flakes like snow, because our landlord, in an economical mood, bought paint that doesn't stick to the ceiling.

In the bathroom a beautiful pale-yellow shower curtain of a miraculous new plastic guaranteed not to crack, streak, fade, tear, or stick together replaces the old torn one, but the faucets still leak because the landlord, in an earnest endeavor to prevent inflation, has not seen fit to supply washers of the appropriate size.

In the kitchen I can now have whipping cream, canned foods, cheese, chickens, and sometimes good fresh butter; but I cannot close the kitchen window, no matter how cold the weather, because it has warped, and our landlord hesitates to spend money needlessly in repairs.

We have Scotch tape in a plastic holder, but the doorbell does not work. We use the Scotch tape to put up little signs advising would-be visitors to knock in the old-fashioned way with the knuckles. Our landlord, no spendthrift he, suggested helpfully that if my husband would buy and install a set of chimes we might be happier.

For our baby, there are now available nylon crib sheets, plastic toys, carriages with springs, disposable diapers, electric bottle warmers and sterilizers, and all the blankets, towels, shirts, sweaters, and safety pins that a baby could possibly want. But if I take the baby out for some sun and fresh air, we shall still have to grope our way from the front door to the elevator. Our landlord supplies one 15-watt bulb to light the hall. We have offered to buy a 25-watt bulb, or even a reckless 40-watt bulb, but the landlord feels that this would run up his electric bills beyond all reason.

I guess we're living in the better world — but who's going to tell the landlord?

The Lime Tree

By ROBERT BRITTAIN

that you may be as the lime tree and calm and
over me coolly leaning
cavern of leaves deeply
green of the sea-weed idle in sea-hollow:

glaucous these waters the depth of their quietness
folded as silence is numb in
the humming dark of a shell O Tree
O sea-deep cavern of leaves.



Books and Men

THE CRISIS IN BOOK PUBLISHING

by ALFRED R. MCINTYRE

1

FOR several months the trade book publishing business has been in the doldrums. Sales are somewhat down and costs very much up compared with two years ago, when about as many books could be sold as could be manufactured, and when government purchases for the Army and Navy were a substantial part of every trade book publisher's business. For about three years, during World War II, the publication of new titles was of necessity radically reduced, and a good many of the older books had to be dropped by publishers because of governmental controls of the use of book paper and reduced manufacturing facilities caused by personnel shortages. Drastic steps were taken during that period to save paper and to save manufacturing costs. Books were made smaller and thinner, with narrower margins and fewer pages, to the point where, in the summer of 1945, all possible economies had been made, barring important technological improvements in the graphic arts industry.

By trade books I mean novels, biographies, historical works, cookbooks, books for children, as distinct from schoolbooks, law, medical, and technical. The trade book publishers of any country are, in a sense, the arbiters of its literary tastes. Collectively they decide what the general public shall read in book form. But for the encouragement they received from one or another trade book publisher in their early days as writers, some of the men and women rated at or near the top among twentieth-century American authors might well have abandoned writing and taken up other careers.

ALFRED R. MCINTYRE, President of Little, Brown & Company since 1926, is one of the most widely respected and reliable experts in the publishing field. The apprehension with which he views the steadily rising cost of book production must be taken with gravity by both management and the graphic arts unions.

Soon after V-J Day, paper controls were removed and a good many publishers of trade books pulled out of their files plans for post-war expansion and assured themselves that in 1947 their sales would be larger than ever before if sufficient paper was available, and would be double their sales in 1941. Almost every publisher began commissioning young men of promise to write first novels; began competing through substantial offers of cash advances with other publishers for the memoirs of admirals, generals, and former members of cabinets here and abroad; began issuing the books under contract that he had had to postpone until the end of the war even though the manuscripts had been delivered; and more or less acted as if a book publishers' millennium were close at hand. He might have seen that the signs pointed the other way, but the wish is often the parent of unwise enthusiasms. Each individual publisher thought, that autumn, that he had discovered — or soon would — several young novelists destined to become famous within a few years. Conservative business judgment gave way to editorial optimism.

That October, wage controls were lifted; and with the turn of the year the industry stopped paying excess profits taxes. With controls lifted, the cost of living began to rise; salaries and wages could be and were freely increased by book publishers; staffs depleted during the war were filled up and even expanded; and that thing called "overhead" began to mount rapidly, which of course was going to be all right if the publishers' millennium was just around the corner.

Forty years ago this autumn, three months after I graduated from college, I went to work for a Boston publishing house at a salary of \$6.00 a week, and I am still there. At that time more than half the employees were paid less than \$15.00 a

week. Today, the minimum wage in publishing houses is around \$25.00, and a green secretary starts at \$35.00. During these forty years the retail prices of new books have probably just about doubled, while the cost of living has risen at least half as much again.

There have been two major increases in wages paid in the graphic arts industry since the end of the Second World War, and there were lesser increases during the war. Take the case of typesetting. I know of a large plant in New England which in 1941 was charging to set type 90 cents a thousand ems. (The novel of average length is likely to have on each page something over a thousand ems.) Four increases during the war brought the price to \$1.15 per thousand ems. Then, with the war over and with wage controls off, the price went to \$1.30 in January, 1946; to \$1.50 in March, 1946; and recently to \$1.75. In other words, the price the publisher pays for composition has nearly doubled; wages in the plant have gone up 82 per cent during the same period; and in November, when the compositors will start getting forty hours' pay at present rates for thirty-seven and one-half hours' work, and time-and-a-half for any additional hours worked, the total hourly wage increase will be 100 per cent if the plant operates forty hours a week. Electrotypers' wages for making electrotypes plates have increased almost as much. The fees paid jacket designers have increased drastically, and so have all the other items that enter into what is known as plant expense.

Paper, printing, folding, and binding prices have risen too, drastically, but with considerable variation. Royalties are a matter of individual contract, but the successful author normally gets 15 per cent of the retail price or 25 per cent of the publisher's receipts. In theory, most trade book publishers plan to spend for advertising and promotion 10 per cent of the retail price of a new book for each copy sold during its first season, and sometimes for a longer period. But they cannot very well avoid overspending on the flops.

The publisher's overhead used to be figured as 25 per cent or less of his total sales of his own editions of all his books, old or new; right now the publisher who keeps his overhead down to 30 per cent is the exception. Of course overhead includes the salaries and bonuses paid to top executives, and these vary with the different houses; but by and large the salaries and bonuses paid to the key people in the industry compare most unfavorably with those paid by magazines and newspapers of large circulation and by the motion picture industry. A major element to be considered in pricing books is

the discount to dealers. Discounts have increased slightly during the past six years, but in the comparative figures that follow I will use the figure generally named as the current average, 43 per cent. The reader should have in mind, in all fairness, that discounts vary with quantity, that jobbers receive larger discounts than booksellers do, and that the average discount obtained by a small bookshop may be very little more than 40 per cent.

2

LET us take the case of a novel of 350 pages, with a paper wrapper or jacket printed in four colors, and suppose that 10,000 copies are printed; 10 per cent of the list price is spent in advertising and promotion, and the author is paid a royalty of 15 per cent. In 1941 and 1945 it would have been priced at \$2.50; today, probably \$2.75 or \$3.00, though at least one publisher would set a price of \$3.50.

In 1941, with the retail price \$2.50, the publisher's outlay would have been, overhead not included, about:—

Plant.....	\$1100
Sheets.....	1160
Folding and binding.....	1360
Advertising and promotion.....	2500
Author's royalty.....	3750
TOTAL.....	\$9870

and his receipts would have been \$14,250, leaving a gross profit of \$4380 and, after allowing 25 per cent of receipts for overhead, a net profit of \$818.

In 1945, for a novel of the same length, but made smaller and thinner, with the price still \$2.50, the publisher's outlay would have been somewhat higher than in 1941, and his gross profit, just a little more than enough to cover the overhead, except that in 1945, with sales booming, his overheads percentage-wise were lower than in 1941.

Now let us look at the situation in the summer of 1947 in a case where the publisher, knowing how costs have risen but fearing a buyers' strike, decides to make the retail price of a new 350-page novel \$2.75, but to fix his appropriation for advertising at the same figure as if the price were \$2.50. His expenditures are probably at least:—

Plant.....	\$1900
Sheets.....	1610
Folding and binding.....	2320
Advertising and promotion.....	2500
Author's royalty.....	4125
TOTAL.....	\$12,455

His receipts will be \$15,675, and his gross profit \$3220 — which, after deducting overhead equal to

30 per cent of the receipts, will result in a net loss of nearly \$1500.

Another publisher, who knows well that this is bound to happen, prices a similar novel at \$3.50 and spends 35 cents a copy for advertising the printing of 10,000 copies. If, despite his higher price, he sells them all, his costs will be: —

Plant	\$1900
Sheets	1610
Folding and binding	2320
Advertising and promotion	3500
Author's royalty	5250
TOTAL	\$14,580

to which we might add \$300 which he spends to make a better-looking book because of the high price — for example, a two-color title page, decorative type headings for chapters, and gold-and-ink stamping on the cover. With expenses of \$14,880 and receipts \$19,950, his gross profit is \$5070, which will not take care of a 30 per cent overhead.

It appears, therefore, that even if a novel of this length is priced at \$3.50, the publisher cannot make a satisfactory net profit on a sale of 10,000 copies. But we must not overlook one *possibility*. If, when he is charging substantially higher prices for the majority of his books, his sales in number of volumes rather than number of dollars can be maintained instead of falling off, his business will increase to a point where his overhead percentage will shrink. But can this be expected to happen? I think not.

If it is not likely to happen, then the publisher, in order to secure a satisfactory net profit on his new novels, will have to price at \$3.00 those now priced at \$2.00, at \$4.00 those now priced at \$2.75, and at \$5.00 those now priced at \$3.00, and he will have to take more or less the same attitude about prices for books of nonfiction and books for children. I believe that the adoption of that policy would drive a large part of the reading public away from the bookstores. On the other hand, the price policy at present being followed by a good many publishers, which is to keep prices as low as they can, compels the publisher to depend for his profits entirely on the special income that comes to him — to be shared with the author — from book-club adoptions, royalties on the leasing of plates for cheap editions, and the revenue from the sale of other subsidiary rights; and in the long run this is unsound economically for the industry.

I have attempted to illustrate the situation on a novel of average length which has a better than average sale. It would be well, however, to view the present situation from the standpoint of the trade publisher's entire sales of his books old and new but disregarding his profit from special income.

This year the company with which I am associated budgeted for sales about 50 per cent larger than its average for the years 1937–1941 inclusive, and for slightly larger sales than it secured in 1945 and 1946. In other words, although we set a sales budget which would break all records for the company, our expenses for plant, manufacture of books, royalty, advertising, overhead, and reserves indicated a profit from operations of less than one per cent of sales, so that even if the sales budget is met, which is far from certain, the company will depend for its profit from its trade department almost entirely on its special income. Most of my friends in the trade publishing business tell me that they are in the same boat; and unfortunately the special income is far from certain in its amount, and varies from year to year and with individual publishers.

The trade book publishing industry is a small one, but it is to the interest of authors in general, and of book clubs, magazines, and motion picture companies, that it be a healthy one. Such authors as A. J. Cronin, James Hilton, Kenneth Roberts, and John Steinbeck first gained fame through their books, and in most cases without benefit of book club until their reputations had been established. Many an author has had to write several books and find a publisher, and maybe a second and then a third, before he hit the jack pot. Sometimes the first publisher, seeing his promise, was patient until it became a reality. Book manufacturers will need a healthy trade book publishing industry when the current abnormally large demand for college texts, engendered by the educational program under the GI Bill of Rights, subsides as it surely will in two, three, or four years. The retail book trade needs a healthy trade book industry as much as publishers need a stable and efficient retail book trade. And finally, the reader whose literary tastes cannot be satisfied by just the current best-sellers needs them both.

3

Now I shall stick my neck out at the risk of offending a good many people with whom my company does business. First, the author. With retail prices up, and likely to rise dangerously from the standpoint of the consumer, lower royalties, by percentage, are in order, at least until the break-even point for the publisher is reached. It is not how much an author gets per copy sold, but how much he gets in all from the sale of his book, that is important. A good many literary agents, and some authors, already realize this. And the publisher would not spend so much for advertising — a good deal of it

often wasted — but for his fear that even greater overspending by some other publisher will impress an author whom he does not wish to lose.

Currently the book clubs are the *bête noire* of the booksellers. Book clubs compete with the retailers on a price comparison basis. There has been a steady increase in the price differential, chiefly because of book-club liberality in the matter of book dividends and the free book for joining. A good many dealers feel that the book clubs are driving them out of business. At the same time, because most of the selections of the largest clubs are best-sellers in the stores, the dealers put more effort into selling these titles than they do into backing up publisher enthusiasm for a good many other new books that have not received the book-club accolade and will not get its advertising. A more moderate price differential would somewhat brighten the state of mind of a good many booksellers, which is certainly one of extreme pessimism. Anyway, let the booksellers cheer up! They have plenty of problems, and the publishers want to help in their solution. But please, Mr. Bookseller, don't let your worries stand in the way of your trying to sell all the good books you can.

As for the book manufacturers, probably the workers in the graphic arts industry were underpaid for their skills before the war and the manufacturers were not making an adequate profit, but let them beware now. I wonder how many of them realize the magnitude of the problems that are faced by the trade book publishers because of the prices they are now compelled to pay for their product. It is of paramount importance to the book industry that technological improvements be made as soon as possible, with lower costs the aim; but this will not happen for some time. Right now, in their own future interest, a good many book manufacturers would do well to reduce their prices even though it means smaller profits for them. Important publishing projects are dropping by the wayside, and it seems likely that in two or three years, if present costs continue, a good many book manufacturers will be seeking orders rather than, as now, accepting some with reluctance and turning down others.

The pricing policy which a majority of the leading trade book publishers seem to be following will be unsound unless they can maintain volume, avoid small printings which cost much more per unit than large ones, keep to a minimum the number of unprofitable books, spend less for advertising per dollar of sales, and pursue a watchdog policy on authors' royalties and guarantees and on all the expense of operation known as overhead.

What perhaps is most disturbing about the pres-

ent situation is that it lessens the chances of really promising young writers to get a hearing and is likely to limit seriously the publication of important and useful books, books of cultural value, ideological books, books relating to the peace for which we strive, which may be as vital as some of the books that dealt with the winning of the war — books that are unlikely to have large sales. The publisher's break-even point is now certainly double what it was before the war. But far too many manuscripts that cannot qualify as important from the literary standpoint, but at the same time seem, to the publisher concerned, good enough merchandise to have a chance of producing a gross profit, are being accepted for publication. Far too many projects that turn out badly are being commissioned by publishers.

For a long time I have been a firm believer in birth control for books, and whenever I have weakened I have regretted it. Let me quote what I said in the *Publishers' Weekly* in 1931. "I believe certain books should be published even though they are sure to be unprofitable. But I believe that a great many unprofitable books that are second rate of their kind could be eliminated without much risk of a best-seller being lost, and that the consequent cutting down of publishers' lists would improve the sales of the books they did publish. When a publisher is deciding about a manuscript let him say: 'Is it a book that on its merits, without consideration of how it will sell, I *must* publish because, although I am in business to make money, I have a duty as a publisher occasionally to try to do a service to literature? If not, *is it first class of its kind?*'" Strict adherence to this rule, turning down manuscripts that are accepted on the ground that "some other publisher will surely take it if we don't," would reduce the average publisher's new book lists by 20 per cent and save him a lot of money.

And now just a word to the reader. First, publishers of trade books are not profiteers. They find their work fascinating, but they do not expect to get rich on it. Second, while a few books have very large sales, don't forget that a majority of the new books never attain a sale of 10,000 copies. Not many authors earn substantial incomes from their book royalties. Third, even though you select your books by studying the best-seller lists, please do read the book reviews and browse in your bookshop. Intelligent readers rarely have identical tastes. Finally, if you regard books as a necessity rather than as a luxury, — and I believe that most of the readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* do so regard them, — your budget for book purchases should be up just as your food bills are.

MAURICE BARING

A Recollection

by SIR RONALD STORRS

1

MAURICE BARING was thirty-eight when I first met him, with Aubrey Herbert, in Tokatlian's Armenian Restaurant on the Golden Horn in 1912. He was already at the height of his powers, and I at once realized that here was not only a rare spirit but — what the rarest by no means always is — an entrancing companion.

Maurice was a living exemplar of the truth of Renan's phrase: "The value of a man is in proportion to his faculty of admiration" — admiration not only felt, but expressed and communicated. His interests were extraordinarily far-flung. He was equally at home with the greatest writers of English, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin, and Greek; with the then almost startling additions of Danish and Russian literature. Indeed it may be said that, excepting only *The Lusads* of Portuguese Camoëns, Maurice had absorbed the whole of European culture. His knowledge and *Schwärm* were not expressed in vague, undocumented enthusiasm; they were exact and clear; never academic — still less pedantic — but always scholarly; with the effect of profound learning ever so lightly worn. Here indeed was instruction with delight. He loved book talk: discussions about style, meters, influences, translations; and in this respect took his acquired and cultivated inheritance very seriously, even glorying to a certain extent in the height of his brow!

He hated deprecation or depreciation of high

Classicist, diplomatist, and administrator, SIR RONALD STORRS, K.C.M.G., C.B.E., was Oriental Secretary to Lord Kitchener in Egypt (and initiator of the Arab Revolution); Military Governor of Jerusalem, 1917–1920; Civil Governor of Judaea, 1920–1926; Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Cyprus 1926–1932 and of Northern Rhodesia, 1932–1934. While in Cyprus he had the misfortune of seeing his beautiful library destroyed by fire. He was a close friend of T. E. Lawrence (whom he introduced to the Grand Sharif of Mecca) and of Maurice Baring. His autobiography has been published in the United States by Putnam's as *The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Storrs*, and in England as *Orientalism*.

literature, going so far as to protest in the *Times*: "When people hide or deny their culture — and I mean deny, not modestly conceal it — laugh at culture . . . I see red; because I regard this culture as the bulwark of our civilization, rapidly alas being undermined by the relentless tide of education, and our most precious heritage, which we are fast losing." Thus in a letter of the mid-thirties he writes: "P.S. I am sending you for Christmas the second edition of *Have You Anything to Declare?* You will note that I have deleted a translation by Andrew Lang of an epigram by Rufinus, and inserted one of my own. The reason of this is that the Dons at Oxford, who are preparing a complete translation of the *Anthology*, preferred my version."

Withal he could be touchingly humble, asking — and often following — the advice of manifest inferiors. He had given me, for suggestions, the proofs of this book; and I found that he had rendered Horace's *flavam comam* by "sun-kist hair." I asked him why not "yellow hair," as Horace had written — probably for the excellent reason that yellow hair was as stimulating to South Europeans as black hair is to Nordics; and when he insisted, I begged him to stand for two minutes at Hyde Park Corner and watch the buses pass. It was the moment when a certain orange was being widely advertised, and he had to endure the procession in both directions of some fifty or sixty buses labeled, in twenty-inch lettering, "Sunkist." By luncheon I had received a telegram: "Printing Yellow, Maurice."

This master of eight civilizations records with obvious happiness how once, when a war correspondent in the Russo-Japanese War in Manchuria, he could not decipher the address on a telegram, and asked the censor's Cossack servant what it was. "He patted me on the back and said, 'No, little pigeon — I am like you; I can't read or write either.'"

His deep and reverent enthusiasm for poetry

seemed even to stimulate his affectionate extempore parodies and perversions of the classics; sometimes by "safety qualifications — like a Liberal M.P.," he would say; as, for instance, in "La Belle Dame sans Merci": —

Most of the sedge seems to have withered from the pond,
And practically no bird is, for the moment, singing.

He liked exchanging alternate stanzas of Swinburne's "Dolores" in a rich Irish brogue, or quoting famous passages in the heavy German accent of a Royal Prince of forty years ago.

2

I AM not treating of Maurice's prose, as well known in France, Italy, and Spain as in England; and will but name the delights of his *Diminutive Dramas* and *Lost Diaries*. But he was also a sensitive, true poet — occasional only in that his muse was as a rule fired by occasion. His Pindaric "In Memoriam A. H." has been acclaimed as the solitary expression of high poetry which aerial warfare has yet evoked: Dantesque in its precision and absence of stock poetic diction, and of a poignancy deserving to be placed with the few great elegies: —

Fighting, fighting against odds,
Such as in War the Gods
Ethereal dared when all the world was young:
Such fighting as blind Homer never sung,
Nor Hector nor Achilles never knew,
High in the empty blue.

with the noble calm of the ending cadences: —

And in the portals of the sacred hall
You hear the trumpet's call,
At dawn upon the silvery battlement,
Re-echo through the deep
And bid the sons of God to rise from sleep
And with a shout to hail
The sunrise on the city of the Grail:
The music that proud Lucifer in Hell
Missed more than all the joys that he forwent;
You hear the solemn bell
At vespers, when the oriflammes are furled;
And then you know that somewhere in the world
That shines far off beneath you like a gem,
They think of you, and when you think of them
You know that they will wipe away their tears,
And cast aside their fears;
That they will have it so,
And in no otherwise;
That it is well with them because they know,
With faithful eyes,
Fixed forward and turned upwards to the skies,
That it is well with you,
Among the chosen few,
Among the very brave, the very true.

To this poem T. E. Lawrence devoted two letters — of which these are extracts: "I think that if ever a death poem has been good, it is yours. It takes me, each time I read it, absolutely by the throat . . . so simply sincere, and grievous, and splendid. I think Lucas will live, thanks to you, for as long as your language. You have the gift — the great gift — of just putting out your finger effortlessly, to touch us in the heart. . . . Damn it all, what a slow and clumsy way of saying that you have lifted me right out of myself in happiness. It's a wonderful thing; makes me shiver."

In the following sonnet, we learn explicitly — what was indeed implicit in his work, and life — how passionately real for him were the great creations of the mind: —

I am the Prince of unremembered towers
Destroyed before the birth of Babylon;
And I was there when all the forest shone
While pale Medea culled her deadly flowers.

I heard the iron weeping of the King,
When Orpheus sang to life his buried joy;
And I beheld upon the walls of Troy
The woman who made of death a little thing.

I heard the horn that shook the mountain tall
Where Roland lay defeated: and the call
That fevered Tristram whispered to the sea,
And brought Iseult of Cornwall to his side,
I saw the Queen of Egypt like a bride
Go glorious to her dead Mark Antony.

Le Prince is a facet of Maurice himself.

He abounds in the briefer startling felicities. Ending a short love poem, he quotes: —

"Nothing shall come of nothing; speak again!"
Still, out of nothing God made time and place
The sun, the stars, the summer and your face.

Hear him now, epigraphic, epitaphial, lapidary, on "Williams of the Times."

Upon the bread and salt of Russia fed,
His heart with her high sorrow soared and bled,
He kept the better part and gave away
The shining salt to all who came his way.

Lighter, but in the graceful tradition of Clodia's sparrow, lamented by Catullus, is the "Little Elegy" on Juliet's owl.

Juliet has lost her little downy owl,
The bird she loved more than all other birds.
He was a darling bird, so white, so wise,
Like a monk hooded in a snowy cowl,
With sun-shy scholar's eyes:
He hooted softly in diminished thirds;
And when he asked for mice,
He took refusal with a silent pride —
And never pleaded twice.
He was a wondrous bird, as dignified

As any diplomat
That ever sat
By the round table of a Conference.
He was delicious, lovable and soft.
He understood the meaning of the night,
And read the riddle of the smiling stars.
When he took flight,
And roosted high aloft,
Beyond the shrubbery and the garden fence,
He would return and seek his safer bars,
All of his own accord; and he would plead
Forgiveness for the trouble and the search,
And for the anxious heart he caused to bleed,
And settle once again upon his perch,
And utter a propitiating note,
And take the heart
Of Juliet by his pretty winning ways.

His sense of form never deserted his verse, whatever the theme, high or light; and he threw off with unstudied ease sonnets, ballades, and triolets in those far-off happy pre-1914 days when meter, rhythm, and even the music of rhyme were still esteemed an enhancement of poetry. I feel we must have his lightest vein, too, so —

MOAN IN THE FORM OF A BALLADE

I went to someone's dinner and a play,
And supper, with a man whose name was Duff,
Or Sydney Herbert, or the poet Gray.
I felt inclined to chatter like a chough.
The Cardinal, whose health I drank, was Puff,
When all at once the wine went to my head,
I felt as if at sea about to luff.
I can't remember how I went to bed.

The chairs and tables glimmered far away;
I thought I heard Sir William Goodenough
Remark upon the road to Mandalay,
How much he liked a little bit of fluff.
Then everybody played at Blind Man's Buff;
It must have been, I think, my nose that bled.
I heard a player shout "I'll call the bluff."
I can't remember how I went to bed.

I'm feeling very far from well to-day;
I cannot bear the taste of smoke or snuff,
Nor anything that's brought upon a tray,
My brow is fevered and my voice is gruff.
I've taken what is called a "Quantum Suff"
Or "Nisi prius" as the lawyer said.
The doctor came and left me in a huff.
I can't remember how I went to bed,

ENVOI

Prince, have you heard of that tremendous stuff
That startles into life the quiet dead?
I drank it till I felt I'd had enough.
I can't remember how I went to bed.

3

MAURICE possessed a strong strain of the shrewdness of the Barings, something which reminded one

of the judgment of Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer; something too, of Sydney Smith's idea of an extraordinary man: "He has as much wit as if he had no sense, and as much sense as if he had no wit." He had a love — and a gift — of music; he could improvise with gay and convincing confidence in manners ranging from Chopin and Schubert to de Falla and Benjamin Britten.

These diversions involved late hours, which might wring from the guest who had missed his last train, tram, or bus a wistful "With thee conversing I forget all time." But even from those marooned near dawn on an empty platform I never heard a regret.

Maurice had also his jokes, which though technically "practical" were (incredibly for that kind) neither boring nor offensive. On the day that Austria launched the 1914 war, we received at luncheon an urgent telegram: "Feel sure if you and I got together we could soon settle this unhappy business, Franz Josef"; and in mid-1917, in the War Cabinet Secretariat, I would be handed compromising affectionate telegrams from Lenin or the notorious traitor Bolo Pasha. But his range was not limited to paper. There were his athletic contortions and convolutions when voyaging, a welcome — soon a loved — guest with the Royal Navy; culminating in an easy stroll round the Gun Room Mess with a full champagne glass maintaining unstable equilibrium on the crown of his head.

In all companies he was prodigal of himself — of the God's plenty of his endowment. Indeed, he was generous in every way.

Who but Maurice would have planned, and himself produced, the "Gepäcks"? These are small square volumes, very strongly bound, of blank pages in which he pasted poems and parts of poems cut by himself from other books, thus forming unique polyglot anthologies of his own choice in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek, and Russian. He would give them as presents to his friends. The first was *Das Gepäck*, and the series was continued to a dozen by *Das Grosse Gepäck*, *Das Kleine Gepäck*, *Mein Gepäck*, *Uno Avulso Gepäck*. Another, *Das Retrospective*, which he gave to T. E. Lawrence, is now mine. Lawrence wrote of this: "A gorgeous little thing: Little! it's as fat as Chesterton and Belloc combined, and ever so much riper inside than the best Stilton."

When my books, including Harry Cust's *Definitive Gepäck*, were burned with my other things in Cyprus, there came a cable: "Sending library, Maurice." Remembering the Franz Josef, Lenin, Bolo Pasha series, I answered nothing until a small but heavy chest arrived, containing his own traveling library of little classics, in seven languages.

A day before I left for France in 1937, Maurice wrote: "You can do something for me in Paris. You can go to a bookshop called Louis Connard, No. 6, Place de la Madeleine. He has beautiful books. I should like you to explain to him that the reason why I write him, when I do, such awful scrawls, is that I can't hold a pen or pencil. I should like you to get yourself a present there from me. I enclose the wherewithal." And as he said goodbye to a visitor at Halfway House, his seaside home in Rottingdean, he would stop before a bookshelf, pull out a Virgil or Horace, and thrust it into one's hand with a *dédicace* "From Publius Maro" or "From Walter Savage Baring."

In his early years Maurice had joined the Church of Rome — "the only action in my life," he said, "which I have never regretted." His religion was strong and deep; human and tolerant as if he had been born in the faith, and wholly free from the carping and girding of so many recent converts to any faith or cause. As I was helping him to rehang the fourteen Stations of the Cross in his little private chapel, he was muttering with the lovable familiarity I have often observed in Roman Catholics — and in Moslems — "Yes! HE'd prefer a little higher," or "No. SHE wouldn't care for that corner."

4

IT WAS a heart-rending perversity of fate that this kindest, most sociable and hospitable, as well as inspiring, of men should have passed the last eight years of his life lying under a steady, remorseless crescendo of discomfort, disability, and nerve-racking pain. As early as 1936 he wrote: "I am in London from Monday till Thursday having what is called treatment. The doctor asked me if I could still understand simple sentences. I said yes, I could read words of one letter like the Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*." A little later, "My doctor is no doubt doing me good, but he makes one feel as if one had been walking up Mount Everest."

By 1937 he ends a letter thus, "Yours, while this machine is to him. . . ." with a yet more pathetic postscript: —

My body is a broken toy
Which nobody can mend.
Unfit for either play or ploy,
But all things end. The siege of Troy
Came one day to an end.
My body is a broken toy
Which nobody can mend.

Yet to the last he could have said truly: —

Amid the mass of ruins they did make
Safe and all scarless still remains my mind.

As late as November, 1944, he wrote: "I finished not long ago reading the complete plays of Shakespeare from A to Z. If we accept the dates given us of when he first began to write for the stage and when he retired to Stratford, he must have written very quickly. If we accept the date given us of his birth it leaves us with six or eight (I forget which) years of complete blackout during which we haven't the faintest idea where he was or what he did. I found on this re-reading many astonishing things; e.g. a complete and final description of the battle of France [1940] in *Pericles*."

His deep devotion to the Russian people and Russian literature — as he had known both — continued to the end: up to 1943 he was writing and publishing admirable versions of Pushkin and Alexsei Tolstoi. He did the best with Soviet verse and music, but had to admit his disappointment with both. To our younger writers he grew more and more indulgent and charitable: "I don't feel it's really great verse, but perhaps I don't understand."

By the beginning of the war his eccentric typing had been replaced by slow dictation through the clear writing of his nurse, ending sometimes with two or three words in a tragically tremulous scrawl. In May, 1944, he could still say in acknowledgment of my obituary of our loved Ethel Smyth: "Yes: Landor's obituary was truer about her than about anyone — including himself: the last two lines that is to say, *Not the beginning: she strove with all her might*."

The news of the liberation of Paris reached him at Eilean Aigas in Scotland, where he lay the last five years of his life. A French military chaplain on sick leave stood at the salute by Maurice's bedside and said the *Te Deum*. Anxiously he loved France, and one of his last words was, "The French must not think the English are always wrong."

As his weariness increased upon him, he murmured, "It is so strange, I cannot say a prayer these days — not a single prayer." "So unnecessary, Maurice," his friend answered. "So many are saying your name to God — night and day." "Tell them to shout it," he murmured. At eleven that night Maurice died. The friar kneeling by his bed stood up and recited the *Magnificat*.

THE NEW LYRICS OF ROBERT FROST

by DONALD A. STAUFFER

IN New England, steeple bush is a weed that has evidently as poignant and specific associations as loco in the West or aspidistra in London. Steeple bush crowds out the edible grass and is in turn crowded out when the maple, birch, and spruce take over. It is, then, halfway between cultivation and something dark and deep and primitive. That is Robert Frost's position in his latest volume, *Steeple Bush*.

The cultivation is still there: in his "post Franconian, recent Riptonian" period, Frost can make of a drinking cup and a brook near an abandoned house a poem as clear and refreshing as any that have celebrated Falernian wine or the Bandusian fountain. But there is more Lucretius now than Horace, more granite than herbs. Though Frost may be ironically humble in "Astrometaphysical," or ironically aware of his own limits in "The Mid-
dleness of the Road," such poems are no contented celebrations of the Golden Mean, but realizations of stars, sky, space, and time; of

the absolute flight and rest
The universal blue
And local green suggest.

Even in such a perfect reflection as "A Young Birch," tenderness and beauty become elegiac in the contrived succession of the Order of Contents.

These poems, then, are not so much simple as they are elemental. Precipices and dark chasms open beyond the walls of the world, and the vistas through time make a century like the tick of a pendulum. Frost is uncompromisingly aware of an agonizing universe, and creates apocalyptic twentieth-century visions no less grim than Hardy, Yeats, Eliot, and Auden. Frost collects "Five Nocturnes" in this book; there are not an equal number of *aubades*. "I put no faith in the seeming facts of light."

The underpainting for *Steeple Bush* is an un-

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forgiving cosmos. But in poetry, subject matter — or even emotional situation — is trivial in comparison with what the poet *does* with his material. Beauty may be born out of its own despair. This little volume of forty-three poems is inspiring. Frost is one of the very small company of living poets whom it is an immediate pleasure to read. No harm can come from revealing his open secret, for although it may be described, it cannot easily be imitated. His mastery depends upon absolute control of technique and of thought.

While other writers talk about the problem of including the multiplex modern world in a poem, Frost goes ahead and does it. Wordsworth wrote of poetry as "the smile upon the face of science." If this means anything at all, what better example could we find than these lines from Frost's "Skeptic," addressed characteristically to a far star?

I don't believe what makes you red in the face
Is after explosion going away so fast.

To put into two lines a whole astronomical theory of the present state of the universe, including the supporting data dependent upon the wave lengths of light, and then to add psychology and philosophy to science by denying the theory, is perhaps as much metaphysical complexity as is good for half of any quatrain. Yet Frost is accused of simplicity!

What he achieves, of course, is the reduction to common speech, almost as Dante does, of difficult ideas, yet without destroying overtones. He seems simple only because of his language, and because he has done in advance the work of resolution and thought which other poets, more lazy or careless, are content to leave to their readers. Where Yeats threw aside the old embroideries of language to discover that "there's more enterprise in walking naked," Frost from the beginning has more consistently taken what he calls "my barefoot stand." His capacity to generalize in ordinary terms makes him quotable and memorable on every page. Take two noble single-line meditations on restraint: —

He has the greatness to refrain.
Too lofty and original to rage.

Opposed to those many moderns who strive for the unusual and clashing adjective or the puzzling turn of thought, Frost seems to work for a kind of harmonious inevitability which triumphs most when its easiness passes unnoticed. Calculation is made to appear instinct, and the writer's labor becomes the reader's pleasure. Frost's serious puns are no accidents:—

While the trees put on their wooden *rings*
And with long-sleeved branches hold their *sway*.

Or:—

Something was going *right* outside the hall.

Or (for an Eskimo speaker protected from the long Arctic night):—

As one *rankly* warm insider.

His structures are no less pleasurable. "Were I in Trouble" is a lesson to poets in patterning minute sound effects. One of his most successful forms is the triple wave of a Shakespearean sonnet followed by a turn or conclusion, though not necessarily in the proportions of 4-4-4-2. "The Planners," for example, comes out in fourteen lines, but the divisions are three triplets in parallel thought and a five-line conclusion. And "The Middleness of the Road" is cunning craftsmanship: its sixteen lines are divided by structure into four quatrains, and by sense into 3, 4, 4, and 5, so that the quatrains run on, coalesce, and slip together into a single firedrop of lyric. If this were the place, a whole review might be spent on the singing qualities that Frost builds from interjecting three-syllable feet in basic two-syllable patterns, or from rhyming monosyllables with two- or three-syllable words.

The imagery is no less his own. It grows out of respect for little things and for one's native land and language. A "belilaced cellar hole" of a deserted house slowly closes in "like a dent in dough." The myth of the lock of hair turned into a constellation, which Pope modulates at the end of *The Rape of the Lock* and which Yeats intensifies in

And after, nailed upon the night
Berenice's burning hair

becomes, in Frost's wry speech:—

It may not give me hope
That when I am translated
My scalp will in the cope
Be constellated.

What George Herbert did for the church at Bemerton, Frost does for the country around Ripton,

Vermont, using "A Steeple on the House" as Herbert used "The Pulley" or "The Collar" or "The Altar."

The bells are in full chime in Frost's belfry—imagery, structural harmony, language, singing rhythms. And the steeple stretches toward the sky.

The central drive of the volume cannot suggest its variety—its wistfulness toward the "young and unassuming," its ancestral ruminations in "A Cliff Dwelling" and "To an Ancient," the humorously magnificent compliment of "Iota Subscript" (the love poem of Browning's grammarian), the metaphysics of near and far, of a thinking reed in an icy universe. The satiric note is strong. Frost includes the most devastating and funny quatrain of hate since the days of Doctor Fell, and in the course of the volume draws blood (it may be a mere pinking, it may be a decapitation) from the planners, the wagers of holy wars, the believers in clichés and mass opinion, the worshipers of size and of abstraction, the officious, the fearful, the philological deans, the fashionably intellectual, and the scientific materialists. The satire proceeds to the final page of owlishly uninformative "Notes" which would not be so effectively ridiculous if Eliot's *Waste Land* and Auden's *New Year Letter* had not preceded them.

The gayety, and at times the extravagant abandon, of the style is a necessary balance to the dark philosophy which makes many of Frost's contemporaries look like his callow fanatic whose "mind is hardly out of his teens." Frost's mind grows clearer and sharper, less sentimental, with the years. Although he may deliberately protect the independence of "all those who try to go it sole alone," although he may assume the value of skepticism and the need for reticence, *Steeple Bush* contains its trinity of intimations on hope, courage, and love. He still knows that the withered leaves of a young beech in March may be, in some strange world of truth, "the Paradise-in-bloom."

Yeats took for his symbol as an artist the singing metal bird. Here Frost has chosen steeple bush, intervening for a century as an interval of rest in the cycles of the cultivators of the soil. Its spire points toward heaven, and in its rocky pastures it allows us to develop hope and patience, "to make up for a lack of meditation" in case we are too serious, too hurried, and too cultivated in our economics, our pacifism, our etherealizing, our learning, and our scientific "complacent ministry of fear." There is partial irony in calling steeple bush "a lovely blooming but wasteful weed."

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THE ATLANTIC

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THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

BY EDWARD WEEKS

THERE are days like this, days when the Swiss Family Weeks lose their memory and resourcefulness and become just so many Peterkins. The conspiracy of inanimate objects must never be taken lightly — nor the propensity of the eager mind to overlook familiar details in the zest to get the expedition under way. We were bound, the six of us, for the beach under Castle Head, live lobsters were in the bucket with their cover of seaweed, sweet corn would be steamed after them, there was plenty of butter and bread, and beer and peaches to wash the meal down. When dusk fell and high tide brought the fish into the rocks, we would trust our outboard motor to locate and troll for the stripers. The September tide and the full moon should be propitious.

But we had evidently failed to propitiate one of the gods. It was not until we had the motor in place, had stowed the food and extra sweaters, and were looking to the rods that Tom, our friend and skipper, discovered the absence of his fish box. In the camera of the mind he saw where he had left it at home, and since home was an hour's trip he swallowed dismay and agreed to ferry us to the beach and then retrieve while we foraged for driftwood and did the cooking.

The mouth of the river was ruffled by the easterly, with big whitecaps on the bar. A slow roll followed us in, and as the bow grated on the sand, water lipped into the low stern. The girls scurried to get out of the trough but not until their clothes and the spare sweaters were soaked. "Take the oars and

head her out!" said Tom as he pumped. Which discovered to this member of the crew that the oars had been left behind on the dock. Now it was my turn to be dismayed.

Picnics, to which I have become an addict late in life, are the better for being cooked on the spot and eaten without sand. This one took time, for the seaweed was far to seek and the beach, swept clean by last night's tide, had hidden its driftwood under the eelgrass at the foot of the dunes. We built our fire in the lee of a big rock with an old spar for the backlog and rocks to support the grill. The driftwood snapped with a heat as quick as charcoal.

There are almost as many ways of cooking lobster as there are appetites in the country. Personally I like them small and I like them soft with the cream of their own still in the claws. On this occasion we had three inches of salt water in the bottom of our bucket, then a layer of seaweed, then a bundle of three lobsters tied in a cloth, then another layer of seaweed, until all nine lobsters were laid in their nests. Then the bucket went over the hot fire, and was allowed to steam for fifteen minutes. With our backs against the rocks, crusty bread in one hand and a can of melted butter within reach, we feasted as you do when you use fingers, chin, nose, and teeth for the inhalation of good food. Tom had returned in time for his share and now our eyes kept wandering out to sea to catch the terns who might show us where the fish were feeding.

The wind had dropped; the nocturnal surf-casters were wading in and now it was our turn. The women burned the scraps in the embers, the fireplace was sanded, and sweaters went on as the eel skins were fitted for our first run. So as to have more room in the boat, we left cooking gear and picnic basket in a compact trustful group ashore.

Whether with so many aboard we could have caught and gaffed a big striper is a question. An open question. As close to the shore as we dared we turned for a preliminary troll beyond the breakers.



Ellery Sedgwick

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To slow the pace we tried cutting down to one spark plug, which always makes the outboard sulky. It balked in protest; the skipper pulled and pulled — and with that the starting cable broke. The parting jerk woke up the engine and above its sputter I heard the skipper's command, "Lines in: we go home. I don't dare stop her." And so, well fed but unfished, we bobbed across the Bay.

There is a Swiss Family postscript. One if by sea and two if by land: one half-hour to boat the distance between dock and beach but twice that time if you motor the curve inland and then hoof it out to recover your belongings. They were all there neat and safe as we had left them. Anglers are honest except when they tell stories.

A pig in Hollywood

Think of James Thurber and his Walter Mitty, of Thomas Heggen and his Mr. Roberts, of Betty MacDonald and her struggle with the Egg, and you recognize without defining the quintessence of American humor. Think of **Ludwig Bemelmans** and you will see that new elements are present: Bemelmans cooks, his goose, even his American goose, with a European sauce. Like the headwaiters and maitres d'hôtel who emerge so resourcefully in his stories, Bemelmans himself is suave, with a magical command of food and wine, with a polylingual capacity for charming — and disingenuous — phrases, and with a dead-pan observation of human idiosyncrasies. In short, he is a satirist with appetite who first wrote about the Europe he loved and lost, and who now cracks his whip at American conventions and quiddities.

Dirty Eddie is a novel about Hollywood and in it Mr. Bemelmans pays his respects to Belinda, the beautiful redhead of Chicago, and Vanya Vashvily, the producer whom she puts to bed but not the way you think; to Maurice Cassard, the French scenario writer who wears a knitted bib, to Arty Wildgans, the *gemütlich* agent, and to Moses Fable, for whom the lovely Hollywood blossoms are forever opening. He describes the service at Romanoff's and the abalone steaks and French fries of the fish pier; and, as a climax, the sensation felt throughout the studio, and in the private lives I have mentioned, when Dirty Eddie, a neat black pig of utmost intelligence, took over the lead in *Will You Marry Me?*

Mr. Bemelmans is famous as an observer — and collector — of odd facts, and in California he reaps a rich harvest. His comedy was never better than, for instance, when Cassard describes what the studio would like to do to their tyro, Moses Fable; his satire has a cutting edge as in this account of Dirty Eddie's contract: —

It must be said here that once Moses Fable conceded defeat, he did so with good grace. Dirty Eddie . . . was guaranteed star billing; a seven-year contract with yearly increases and no layoff; a percentage of the gross; a waiver of the "force majeure" clause (in case of fire, strike, flood, or other acts of God, he was to be paid anyway); retention of radio and television rights; first-class transportation for any traveling; the right to choose his own stories, hire his own writers, directors, and producers; and the right to approve the cutting of the picture. There was a rider attached to the contract allowing him to do an outside picture a year.

And in serious relief there is the rapier logic of Cassard as he discusses democracy and the war's end, and in Belinda's pathetic recital of her first marriage, a touching short story tucked into the larger frame. This is not the book to end all books about Hollywood. The narrative lacks the scope, the technical curiosity, and the poignancy which gave such promise to the novel which Scott Fitzgerald left unfinished at his death. But Bemelmans, master of the bizarre, has caught to perfection that half of our strangest community.

The big tent

A doctor's son who knows the integrity of the Middle West, a journalist who paid his way by part-time teaching, book reviewing, and as a magician, **Thomas W. Duncan** felt the vibrations of this novel when he chanced on the abandoned ruins of an old circus farm in 1936. In the years that followed he and his wife jogged through the West in a house trailer while he composed the 1300 manuscript pages of *Gus the Great*. This is the spacious, many-peopled story of a small-town toughy who fought his way up despite the stigma of his birth, who was well trained as a printer's devil by one of his mother's lovers, and who traded journalism for the show business — first in an amusement park and then a circus under his own name — with the money he earned by marrying a bovine heiress.

Gus Burgoyne had gumption, courage, and a loud vitality which made him popular with crowds and successful with some women. As a young city editor in the 1890's, he enjoyed the easy come, easy go, of political favors. As a country showman in the prosperity of Roosevelt and Taft, he rolled in the easy shekels. And then the east wind began to blow. There is much vitality, much humanness, in this casual, slow-paced book. One character leads to another and the asides draw you off from the main theme for many pages at a time. But the driving force, the self-confidence, and the magnetism which are so strong in Gus's character keep leading your curiosity on despite the disproportionate length and the undistinctive style. I think that Mr. Duncan

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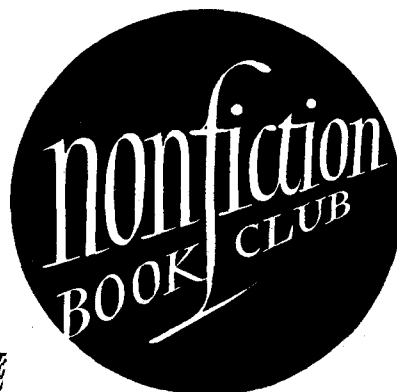


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strikes certain notes too often, as when, for instance, he reiterates Flora's likeness to a cow; I think he has captured the human nature in the print shop and under the big top with better than average plausibility, and I am sure he will be a better novelist when he learns to telescope his genealogy and to suggest instead of spelling out the minor reactions.

You make the present

In few states of the Union are there such sharp contrasts as in Georgia: the beauty of the peach orchards contrasting with the erosion of the one-crop gullies, the disease and illiteracy of the poor country districts contrasting with the energy and charm of Atlanta, the mobocracy of a Talmadge contrasting with the volunteer committee of stalwart citizens who set about cleaning up the state before the war. **Berry Fleming** is a native Georgian who after his education in the Northeast and fifteen years of literary work in Europe and in New York has come home to take an active part in local reform and to write books which, while being rooted in the South, will branch out to Americans everywhere. In *Colonel Effingham's Raid* he told the endearing story of a retired officer's assault upon the sloth, indifference, and chicanery of a Southern community. Now in his bigger and more skillful novel, *The Lightwood Tree*, he has dug deeper to find the taproot of Southern heritage.

Mr. Fleming is a colorful historian and his method in this book is to relate the present against the past, to show in a series of overlapping vignettes how the tenacity of Oglethorpe as he threw back the Spanish invasion, how the faith of young Bruce as he spent himself against the British, how the cursed independence of Senator Jackson as he risked assassination to stop the sale of Western lands — how these traits have descended, however dormant, to the citizens of Fredericksville, Georgia, today. The protagonist of the story is mild-mannered George Cliatt, a teacher in the public schools who at the age of forty finds himself falling in love, and what is worse, projected into the center of a political squabble in defense of one of his former pupils, a free-spoken garage man soon to be drafted. George has been a serene bachelor too long to jump at either of these prospects; his love-making is now shy and now ardent, and as for his bucking the Home Folks Party — why, he would much rather that were done by someone else, preferably a tough-minded lawyer. But fight he must, even if it costs him his job, and his bewildered and indignant stand becomes a demonstration of how often in our own home communities we are willing to let George do it if only we can be left alone.

Choosing his strands from three centuries, Mr. Fleming has woven his story together with fine historical color and deft transitions, and has informed it with the affection of a native. Lazy readers used to the straight ahead incline of romance may find this book a little baffling to follow. But it is unquestionably Mr. Fleming's best novel and one of which Georgia should be proud.

We were giants in those days

I Remember Distinctly by **Agnes Rogers and Frederick Lewis Allen** is my favorite vintage book of this year. Mr. Allen, author of *Only Yesterday* and the able editor of *Harper's*, has the memory of an elephant, a social conscience that smiles as it recalls, and a talent for terse and telling résumé which is the envy of any historian. With the help of his wife, a historian in pictures, he has presented a running commentary which begins with the Welcome Home parades of 1919 and embraces the slinky beaded dresses and the Theda Bara cloche; the Lindbergh Crossing and the Lindbergh Tragedy; the smash hits and the best-sellers of the golden twenties; the strikes and witch hunts and the gang murders; the prohibition night spots and Bryan's case against Darwin; the Hoover depression and the early improvising of the New Deal; the boom of air travel, skiing, radio, and the talkies; the popularity of the great commentators; Willkie's rise and Father Coughlin's slump; the vociferation between Fight for Freedom and America First — a graphic and emotional summing up of that life which came to an end on the Sunday of Pearl Harbor. This is a book of nostalgia, of laughter, and of startling remembrance for those now in their forties. The giggles of the twenty-year-olds will be sacrilegious.

Mickey

In August I spoke with affection of my sixteen-year old spaniel, Mickey, and since then have been trying to convey to him the responses of those who love old dogs. Forgive the immodesty if I quote these three: —

Roaming in my usual leisurely fashion through this month's *Atlantic*, I reached last night your entirely charming story of "Mickey." It is one of the most delightful dog stories I've ever encountered and I hasten to make obeisances in due form. Incidentally, that episode of the squirrel heaving apples at Mickey pleases me for a very special reason. We had a squirrel in our oak tree, whom we named Babe Ruth, because he used to sit on a high limb and let drive with acorns at Whiskey, our gray Persian cat. He was a good shot, too. But whenever we recounted the tale, our friends raised their eyebrows and otherwise indicated doubts as to the

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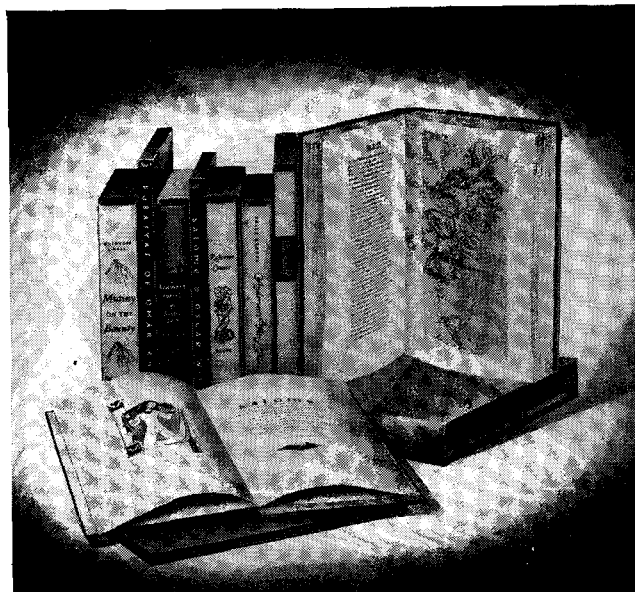
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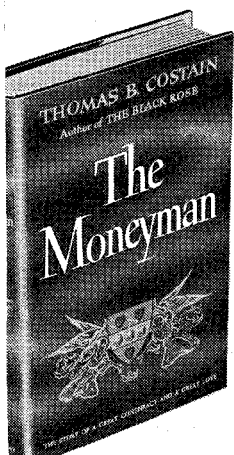
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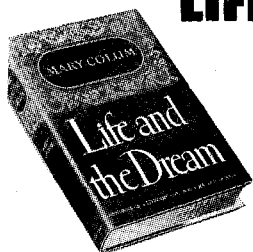
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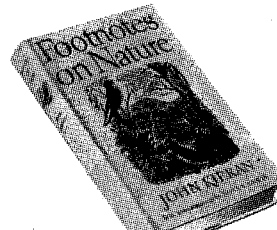
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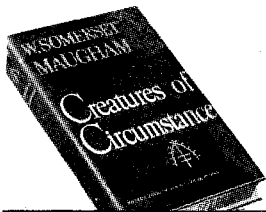
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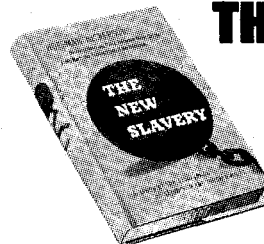
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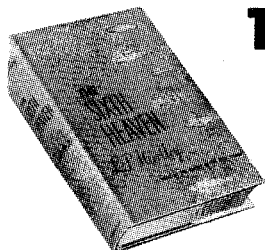
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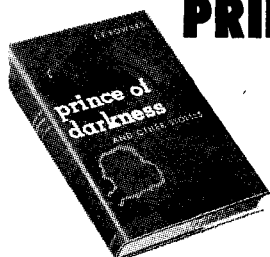
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veracity of the narrators. It was a noble feud and lasted two years, but Whiskey finally achieved "V-S Day," and we had to bury the acorn pitcher. Thanks for bringing up reinforcements on the habits of squirrels! — JAMES POWERS, *Boston, Mass.*

It is pleasant to thank you for your account of Mickey in youth and deep old age. I suppose that a dog's higher satisfactions come from being understood by its human companions. It seems a sorry gap in our line of communication that they cannot take in the printed word. If it were otherwise, how avidly would Mickey (and our own young dachshund) peruse your biography and bark sharp approval! — ROBERT C. SMITH, *Moorestown, N.J.*

Mary and I wish to join in another fan letter: this time over the piece about your dog. You will have ravished all pet lovers simply by your devoted memory. But you have done much more, you have written a bit of living literature which those without pets can enjoy along with those who have them. Your essay should find its place in the anthologies, and be read by generations. So be sure to use it in your next Atlantic Pocket Book. — RAYMOND SWING, *Washington, D.C.*

POETS WHO WEAR WELL

by PETER VIERECK

AMID the novelty of the new books, the reader is likely to overlook the current reissues of poems first published long ago. This year Scribner's is bringing out the *Selected Poems* of Oscar Williams, which range from 1921 to today. Between his first book and the later ones came a sharp break explained by his long self-exile from art into advertising. He is superbly original in idea and imagery.

Excitingly crowded with a thousand metaphors for tragedy and menace, Oscar Williams's book is the authentic mirror of our urban industrial stress. It is a brilliant mirror, and any reader trapped in our big cities is urged to peer into it; he may see his true reflection for the first time. In 1940, when Williams published *The Man Coming Toward You*, W. H. Auden (one of the few to get the point of the book) commented: —

The poems in Oscar Williams's book are concerned largely with the spiritual breakdown of the times. He feels that the mechanized life is the Devil, and the subject of many of his poems is just this theme. . . . But unlike many romantics, Mr. Williams has lived successfully in the world that he attacks, and in whose values he once believed.

Readers with access to Williams's earlier books will be impressed by his revisions in the present volume. Aspiring apprentices, perusing abstract rules of composition, can learn a lot concretely

in ten minutes by simply reading side by side the two versions of "On the Sudden Death of a Young Acquaintance." The original appeared in *The Man Coming Toward You*, and the revised version is in *Selected Poems*, seven years later. The difference is an object lesson in where and where not to stalk the *mot juste*. For example, the "colossal stone of space" becomes the "massive stone of space." Here the impossible word was "colossal," a living word in Milton's day but foully murdered by Hollywood. "Forgive me if my heart sags with aching and if I cry," becomes: "Forgive me if my heart cringes with those who die." The final rhyme-vowel is retained but not with so maudlin a phrase as "I cry" (quite literally a tear-jerker). The emotion is also changed, no longer self-pity but a broader sympathy with others, "with those who die."

Williams is most compelling and most himself when he is tender and angry at the same time. In one breath he loves and hates the zest and corruption of his sidewalks of New York. "This undoubtedly is life," he chants in an autobiographical poem, "and there isn't a soul that wants it that way." Yet some part of us unconsciously does "want it that way." On battlefields and in factories, machines do, it is true, crush their humans; but this is only because humans first built machines to be as they are. The original sin is a moral and not a material one. Consider Williams's poem "Subway." Here "the subway's galvanized throat is torn into craters of speed," while "civilization roared on, into the darkness of the nervous system." But the horror and ugliness and noise are not at all in the subway's steel but in the screaming heart of man: —

The sullen meantime is bulging with ingots of greed:
And what is true is in conspiracy with the thing
that seems
And steel continues to scream, so long as man
screams.

Man does not scream in Wallace Stevens or Robert Hillyer but sings wistfully. Theirs is the drawing room more often than the subway express. Yet Hillyer and Stevens have this in common with Williams: they all seem besieged, outlawed, on the defensive, guarding their individuality and that of their readers from the onslaught of mechanized mediocrity. Not pathetically but with the dignity of integrity, all three are clutching whatever shreds of beauty they can salvage from banality on the march.

In many ways Stevens's diction is the most magical of our day. Of all living poets he is the subtlest in producing deliberate esthetic effects. For this he pays a price, a loss in simple spontaneity. But the result is worth the price. We have

A bewitching woman who turned a city
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so many earthy-primitive "natural" poets, who follow Walt Whitman in crying "O spontaneous me!" Yet America produced only one Stevens.

Harmonium, which Knopf has reissued this year, was a turning point in the culture of the twenties. It is one of the four books that almost singlehanded account for the modernity of "modern" poetry. The other three are Eliot's *Waste Land*, Hart Crane's *Bridge*, and Auden's *Orators*, along with the esthetic theory of the Imagists, Pound, Eliot, and John Crowe Ransom. I could name ten of the younger poets of the 1940's who are, for better or worse, incalculably indebted to the nuance and sensitivity of *Harmonium*. It could not have been republished at a more opportune date. Typical of its beauty is this deathless passage about the encroachment of death (which the reader may compare or contrast with a passage on a similar theme by Hillyer, to be quoted later): —

She dreams a little, and she feels the dark
Encroachment of that old catastrophe,
As a calm darkens among water-lights. . . .

She says, " am content when wakened birds,
Before they fly, test the reality
Of misty fields, by their sweet questionings;
But when the birds are gone, and their warm fields
Return no more, where, then, is paradise?"

Precision — in rhyme, in meter, in stanza form — this is the special perfection of Robert Hillyer. Delightful to ear as well as eye, his new selection is a living rebuke to the arid and prosaic school of poetry. His lines can be sung. They remind us that lyric verse, though by no means the twin, is still the cousin of music.

Robert Hillyer's *Collected Verse* appeared in 1934. But despite the finality, the almost posthumous tone of the word *Collected*, Prospero usually thinks twice before destroying his wand of song. Like Yeats, who wrote some of his finest lines after Macmillan brought out his *Collected Poems*, Hillyer has continued his literary productivity during the thirteen years following 1934. The result is *Poems for Music, 1917-1947* (also by Knopf). The book could well have been entitled *Collected Lyrical Poems*, for it is restricted to lyrics and contains his seventy favorites in this genre. They sound as fresh and exhilarating as if written this morning instead of sometimes as far back as 1917.

Unlike the usual publishers' blurbs with their super-superlatives, the jacket blurb on *Poems for Music* lauds Hillyer with an all too guarded reserve, labeling his work "conventional poetry." Actually it is the sloppy pseudo-surrealist poets who are conventional. Theirs is that most sterile and tyrannic of all conventions, the conformism of adolescent

defiance, disorder as a "new" order, the cheap and easy revolutions of Bohemia, the *rive-gaucheries* of the *rive gauche*. It was unconventional of Robert Hillyer to have stuck to his guns, the guns of discipline, clarity, and esthetic conservatism.

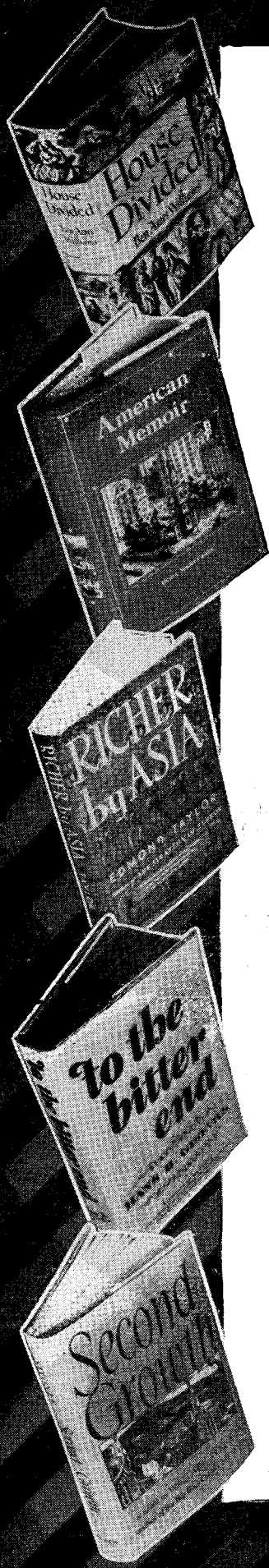
Hillyer's role is like that of a Partisan leader, waging guerrilla warfare for a school of poetry which once ruled Parnassus but was driven underground. He refused to be a collaborationist with the newfangled dictatorship of an unmelodious Free Verse. Scorning present popularity, he swore loyalty to the unfaded (and sometimes even faded) glories of the past. He stood with that small beleaguered band who held the fort of Form in an age when Content was bursting its controls and turning into gush.

His courage has been justified. Time has proved Robert Hillyer right. Many more poets have been returning to rigor and traffic lights, to conservatism in a non-stuffy sense of the word, while at the same time (like true evolutionary conservatives and not static reactionaries) assimilating the precious gains of the innovators. The hour is at hand for America's many unpublicized traditional craftsmen, who tended their pure and unfashionable fire, to claim the credit they deserve. And what Hillyer deserves is more than a grudging, insulting, patronizing praise, such as he has been getting from "friendly" critics for years, about what they call "his nice conventional rhyming."

A long time ago I accidentally found in a newspaper a lyric of Hillyer's, called "Hesperides," which I liked so much that I could not forget its closing lines. "Hesperides" is the most moving of his lyrics, a singing transcendence of death. Yet I looked for it in vain in his new collection. Why cannot a poet infallibly pick his own best works? Is it because any creative writer confuses intention with result and chooses his most ambitious rather than his most achieved poems? Failing to find "Hesperides" in *Poems for Music*, I hit upon an attractive Little Magazine named *The Lyric*, whose summer number is entirely devoted to Hillyer. There I found the missing piece: —

Past life and time the island lies
Where we have learned content;
Reflected in far-seeking eyes
That foundered continent. . . .

Think not my mind that spurns the fact
And clasps the dream is hurled
With time's tremendous cataract
Down margins of the world.
In drifts of darkness I affirm
That fact and darkness have their term.
Past death, past time, the island lies,
And I have seen it with these eyes.



Ben Ames Williams

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Ben Ames Williams

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This is an American historical novel on the grand scale. 1514 pages of closely written narrative, comparable in size, at least, to *War and Peace*. Length alone does not make a great novel, as we learn from such examples as *Gone With the Wind*, but 1500 pages certainly allow an author almost unlimited scope to develop his characters and his story and to achieve a kind of cumulative effect. This Mr. Williams has done with very considerable success. The book is a novel of the Civil War and of a Southern family deeply involved in the fortunes of the slaveholding class. It is closely documented, the result of careful and patient research.

Aside from its theme as a novel, the effect of the war on the various members of the Currain family, a theme which the author handles with sustained skill, it contains two historical theses which will challenge students of the Civil War: first, a sympathetic and skillful defense of the author's great-uncle, General James Longstreet, whose support of Lee, particularly at Gettysburg, has been often criticized; second, a theory as to the failure of the Confederacy. Mr. Williams presents and presses the point that the doctrine of the right to secede and the exaltation of states' rights carried in themselves the seeds of inevitable dissension, of incomplete and divided war effort on the part of the Confederacy. He seems to attribute the economic failure of the South rather to the black-market corruption and inefficiency of selfish interests than to the blockade of Southern ports and the economic superiority of the North. The military failure, he constantly implies, was due in great measure to the unpopularity of the war among the poorer white Southerners and to the selfish withholding of manpower and military support by various governors of seceding states who believed primarily in the right of each state to defend itself with its own militia.

With both of these propositions this reviewer is entirely sympathetic. Longstreet was a noble, wise, and loyal soldier, terrible in battle, and wiser in strategy than the Lee apologists are willing to grant. The great central military picture of the book concerns the battle of Gettysburg, and there I think the author is sound in presentation and interpretation. Lee was ill served in that battle by some of his "lieutenants" and he was unwillingly but honorably served by Longstreet. Only the most unswerving supporters of General Lee can deny (what he himself generously admitted) that he was, for once, the victim of a fixed idea — that his army was invincible — or that he discarded Longstreet's wise council of a "strategic offensive-defensive" and a march by Meade's left flank for an all-out gamble in a frontal assault.

Similarly Mr. Williams is sound in his analysis of the destructive forces inherent in the Confederacy. He may harp too constantly on the corruption prevalent among the hangers-on in the government and the *embusqués* of all sorts who evaded military service and lined their own pockets. These profiteers were in such sharp contrast to the gallant and long-suffering Confederate patriots that

there may seem to be more of them in *House Divided* than was actually the case. However, Mr. Williams is a more careful and sensitive historian than are the vast majority of novelists. One may safely recommend this book as a fair and studious exposition of a confused period in our history.

Space does not permit a digest of the novel nor a study of the leading characters in its enormous dramatis personae. The various members of the Currain family seem to me well drawn, with Cinda and Travis Currain quite brilliantly presented. The novel holds together in the integrity of the characters and their relations with one another. The author has, however, dragged in a "plot" which is unconvincing and unnecessary. Tony Currain — the grandfather of the Civil War Virginia Currains — had, as an adventurer in "the West," an affair with a native girl, Lucy Hanks. Their daughter, Nancy, married Tom Lincoln, and their child was Abraham. Thus in the middle of the war the proud Currains discover that they are cousins of the frightful ape or baboon in the White House who epitomizes all that they hate and despise. The effect on all of them is profound and in some instances disastrous. But the whole episode and idea strike a false note and in no way assist the sincere and tragic progress of the story.

This is the only real failure or inadequacy which I find in the structure of this honest, strong, and "important" novel. Time will tell us how important it is, but the reviewer, almost overwhelmed by its sheer, solid bulk, is in no case to assign it a definite value or rating. It is incomparably the best historical novel which I have read this year. It may be many years before we read a better one.

A. W.

* * *

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**NOT NOW,
BUT NOW**

to create one? Modernity being not a question of date but of outlook, what sort of education could fit us for this modern world? And finally, can people be taught to tell the truth? — on which question hang all the others. This meager précis is painfully inadequate. The book itself is an infinite enrichment of contemporary thought. Like any other work of fine art, its potency is what it enables us to do for ourselves.

LUCIEN PRICE

EUGENE DELACROIX: HIS LIFE AND WORK
Charles Baudelaire CROWN, \$5.00

IF Joseph M. Bernstein's translation of this essay by Baudelaire had been accompanied by an introduction, it might have been said there that the book observes the centennial of the completion of Delacroix's major work, the murals in the library of the French Chamber of Deputies, executed in the style which Delacroix, after Géricault, so largely created. It might have explained that the glorious drawings which appear on the recto of every leaf of the book were once the subject of insult and derision ("You ought to pay more attention to drawing, M. Delacroix," scolded Ingres). And if there had been an appendix, which the book unforgivably lacks, the reader might have had some clue to the size, date, and whereabouts of the drawings.

If there is occasion to wonder why drawings should have been chosen to represent a Romantic painter, the inventor of a new color language and author of some of the lushest pictures in the wide world, the jacket might have explained — as the text does not, for it is nearly all about painting — that Baudelaire ranked Delacroix as a draughtsman along with Ingres and Daumier.

Baudelaire's text is a ringing defense, composed just after Delacroix's death in 1863, of a man whose influence upon the next generation was much deeper than that of his rivals: his decomposition of color gave birth to the new impressionist school. Except for some of the pen and ink sketches, which come off rather spottily, the drawings look well here on watermarked paper which simulates the texture of drawing material.

MAC KINLEY HELM

THE LAST DAYS OF HITLER \$3.00
H. R. Trevor-Roper MACMILLAN

TO THE BITTER END \$4.00
Hans B. Gisevius HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

IN the late summer of 1945, Major H. R. Trevor-Roper of the British Intelligence, onetime Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, was directed by his chief to uncover, "step by step," the events of Hitler's last few weeks of life. Thus began one of the most macabre and complicated episodes in detective work, historical scholarship, psychological research, and archaeological inquiry the

war produced. *The Last Days of Hitler* tells the story of what Major Trevor-Roper discovered.

Many strange books have emerged from the recent European war. None is stranger or more horribly fascinating than this footnote to history. Here indeed is one of those "journeys to the end of night" in which reality eclipses completely such efforts as Celine's fictional imaginings of pre-war days. The British Intelligence officer peels off, one by one, the bombastic vestures of deception with which both the Nazi Party and its Führer clothed themselves. Here they stand naked, amid their intrigues, personal feuds, and almost incredible obsessions, displayed for what they were by the sordid, horrible sequence of their own activities during the final weeks of the war.

The Last Days of Hitler depicts a disintegration of character and personality which is nightmarish. It "sets the seal on Nuremberg," as Marshal Tedder remarks quite truly in his preface; but it does more than that. From the initial chapter, in which "Hitler and His Court" are portrayed with keen discrimination on the eve of the defeat, to the final drama in the Bunker with its repetitious handshakings and farewells, its frenetic comings and departures, its suicides and its epilogue of the ineffable Himmler — the story moves as though through a Dantesque underworld presided over by the Furies. Dispassionate, pieced together from an amazing wealth of evidence and carefully evaluated testimonials, the book has an importance far beyond its immediate purpose — which is to narrate events and display characters of historical significance as they sank, engulfed in the debacle of Europe which they themselves engineered and which Hitler himself willed with a madman's determination. Only the qualms of Speer, the Party War Engineer, thwarted that insane wish-fulfillment from becoming more devastating than it was.

Major Trevor-Roper has traced in these pages the world's most terrifying example of the lengths to which nationalistic megalomania can go when led by the obsessed, abetted by the craven, and exploited by the greedy and opportunistic.

In his story of the opposition within Germany, between the winter of 1933 and the disastrous plot of July 20, 1944, Hans Gisevius presents an invaluable supplement to the investigations of Trevor-Roper. *To the Bitter End* is the work of an insider whose tenacity of purpose in maneuvering against the Nazi regime was abetted by the fact that he occupied successive posts giving him entree to the innermost police circles of the Third Reich. In these pages he bares the evolution of the Nazi system of police terror, from the fantastic plot whose denouement was the burning of the Reichstag to the abortive putsch attempted by Colonel von Stauffenberg. The book is less a history of the Third Reich than a chronicle of its conspiratorial side.

From the abundant testimony presented by Gisevius (himself the mainspring of one group of resisters) it is clear that a German anti-Nazi underground worthy of mention existed and that thousands of Germans paid for

A Scotch doctor
in a black world
at a fateful moment
of history

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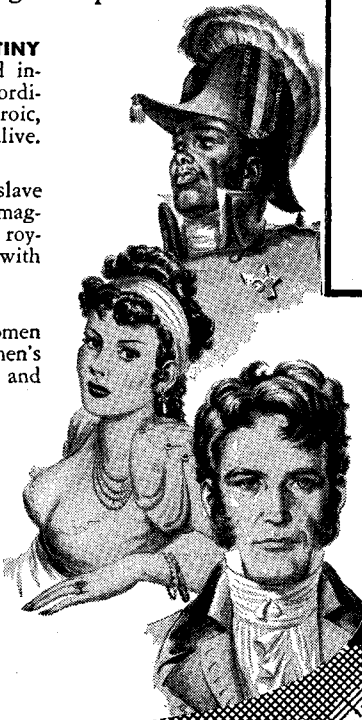
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it with their lives. Yet it is equally evident that this underground bore little resemblance to the clandestine organizations that fought the Nazis in such occupied countries as France, Belgium, and Holland. The Resistance in these latter countries grew steadily in coherence and unity. The German underground moved in the opposite direction.

The dispersal of focus is traced with consummate skill from the very first chapters of Gisevius's book — in which he recounts how he managed, with a few skeptical friends, to unravel the truth about the Goebbels-Göring plot to burn the Reichstag — through successive phases of domestic intrigue, to the amazing fumbles which thwarted the climactic plot against Hitler's life in the summer of 1944.

The author spares no one, not even himself. His account has the inexorable march of a Greek tragedy: the drive of the Nazis for control over the political machinery of state; the campaign to "totalize" the people; the crisis resulting in the notorious blood purge; Himmler's campaign to take over control of the Army (which culminated in the Fritsch crisis); the grand final maneuvering of the Nazi domestic policy by which Hitler cleared the path to the war he sought.

In each phase of the tragedy, various underground cliques sought, with uniform unsuccess, to set up road-blocks. Their most formidable opponent on the direct issue of war itself, this book makes clear, was not the Nazis, but the policy of the British under Chamberlain. Munich smashed the first real conspiracy of the German General Staff to rid Germany of the Nazis on the "peace issue." At the eleventh hour, it provided Hitler with a success story which bowled the Army over completely. Thereafter, the time-serving attitude of the professional soldiers, together with their utter political ineptitude, brought frustration to every endeavor of the anti-Nazi underground.

There are strange omissions in Gisevius's account. He makes only the scantiest passing reference to the role played by the German industrialists and financiers in the development of Hitler's plans. This is the more astonishing because Hjalmar Schacht is presented as one of the leading supporters of Hitler in *To the Bitter End*. In view of the trials now in progress at Nuremberg, at which I. G. Farben's highest officials are under criminal prosecution for conspiracy and crimes against humanity, it would seem that the author is afflicted with a blind spot.

JAMES H. POWERS

POETRY FOR YOU

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C. Day Lewis

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"PERHAPS some of you will become poets when you're grown up, and I expect most of you one time or another will try to write in verse. I can't give you much help there. What I do hope is that this book will help you to enjoy reading poetry, will persuade you that poetry is

one of the great things in life which it would be a shame to miss."

The well-known English poet, C. Day Lewis, doesn't mean that he *can't* give help about writing poetry, but that in the ten short and delightful chapters of this book, now returned to print after three years, he proposes to tell boys and girls how to understand and like the poetry they read. His audience was expected to be British — Lewis is a schoolmaster, and a parent — and the tone and the examples are unmistakably British. It puzzles an American who is also a teacher and parent, to know at what age British children write poetry — and would read this book. In this country there is some poetry written in good high schools and preparatory schools, more in the colleges, but our youngsters would find this book too patiently easy, too kind. Or would they?

Taught by young instructors and professors full of Brooks and Warren, Tate, I. A. Richards, and the cerebrotonic quarterlies, our students, I'm afraid, would not be challenged by this little volume. The first two chapters deal pleasantly with the objections to poetry (it is silly; it is soft) and the excitements of poetry (to make the world your friend; bright is the ring of words) and with the supposed beginnings of poetry in myth and mimicry. The next five chapters present in an amiable and familiar way the materials of poetry and the varieties of poetry. In these and the two closing chapters the examples are fresh, all British, and all excellent. Mr. Lewis, in offering a pair of poems for a test of young judgment, uses a gnarled and memorable Lancashire ballad, and a properly stuffy piece by a minor Georgian. The last chapter, on reading aloud, solo and in chorus, is promising in suggestion. But for the rest, the book is too much a restatement, actually not condescending but really delightful, of all that all the other books say on the enjoyment of poetry.

In spite of Mr. Lewis's remark in the Preface that he can't give much help here about writing poetry, this modest effort, like any book that illuminates the subject, might be just the thing for the younger writer. And after all, there is the Lancashire ballad about Micky Thumps's wake!

JOHN HOLMES

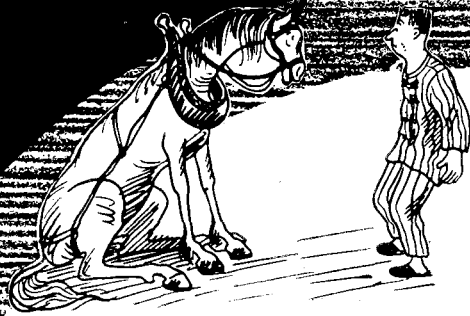
HOW TO DISAPPEAR FOR AN HOUR

Geoffrey Hellman

DODD, MEAD, \$3.00

OF ALL the regular contributors to the *New Yorker* magazine, Geoffrey Hellman comes nearest to personifying the urbanity that the entire staff strives for so incessantly. A tall, affable man, born in New York City and educated at Yale, Hellman has the uncanny knack of writing prose that his employer, Harold Ross, does not mind reading. It happens, more or less coincidentally, to be excellent prose. *How to Disappear for an Hour* is a collection of his best pieces — several short biographical pieces ("profiles" in *New Yorker* parlance) and a generous sprinkling of random essays ("casuals").

Hellman was voted the second wittiest man in his



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nia skies as Grady Dunavant brings his
pack train out of the mountains toward
the pueblo called Los Angeles. Behind
Grady are a thousand miles of desert
and danger. Ahead of him is the dream.
And across his trail spurs golden-eyed
Luz de Zubaran, hurling at Grady a
glance of Spanish pride and hate.
Never again, not even in another
woman's arms, would he be free of her.

Hill of the Hawk is an American story,
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class at Yale ('28); or, to be exact, he polled second in the vote for the wittiest man. It is not this distinction, however, that guarantees him immortality, but the fact that he discovered a Pekinese dog listed by name in the 1936 Social Register. Hellman is an inveterate reader of reference books. Once, in a piece called "Mother Taft's Chickens," included in the present collection, he kindly pointed out to the administrative department of Taft School the addresses of several dozen graduates who had been listed as "missing," and about whom the school had sent out a request for information. He had found the addresses in the reference books on his desk. He remarked in this piece, "I can find out practically anything I want to know by calling up the *Times*, the Public Library's information desk, the British Library of Information, the French Information Center, or by asking my sister." It is no idle boast, either.

Everybody who stays at the *New Yorker* serves a term as an editor. Hellman is remembered as an editor whose ideas verged on parody. Once he suggested that the Talk of the Town department run a piece about the second oldest member of the Racquet Club. As his colleagues' brows rose, he explained, "We've already had a piece about the oldest member." It takes some people that way. It is Hellman's foible — forgivable, perhaps, but not lovable — to write pieces about ornithologists and other people in the field of natural history; he has certainly written more such pieces than any other journalist, living or dead. The book includes profiles, written at generous length, of Dr. Frank Chapman, Curator of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History; Gilbert Grosvenor, Editor of the *National Geographic*; and Jean Delacour, Technical Adviser to the New York Zoological Society. I will trade any or all of these pieces, however, for the one in which he speculates about Mr. Smithsonian's reasons for establishing the Smithsonian Institution. When he wants to be, Hellman is one of the funniest writers in the country; but I sometimes feel he thinks it isn't quite respectable to be a funny writer. And maybe it isn't.

RUSSELL MALONEY

LONELY CRUSADE

\$3.00

Chester Himes

KNOPF

A GENERATION or so ago the new immigrant and his struggles to overcome obstacles and prejudice formed an important element in American writing. Today two top fiction best-sellers deal with racial problems, the one with anti-Semitism, the other with anti-Negroism.

Chester Himes's new novel is a study of the American Negro, a brave and courageous probing into the Negro psyche. His diagnosis reveals a racial malady for which there is no immediate remedy. The cure, as he sees it, is centuries of equality and miscegenation. And in the beginning simple equality is not enough. Equality to the Negro means special privileges.

Mr. Himes's hero, Lee Gordon, is indeed a lonely

crusader, seeking justice in a white ocean of prejudice and discrimination. A college graduate, a sensitive Negro of basic honesty and integrity, he comes up against the usual barriers. His college degree cannot get him a white-collar job, and since he refuses to take menial work, he and his devoted wife live in poverty, with the result that Lee Gordon's sense of manhood and fitness is gradually corroded, and his wife loses faith in him, though not her love for him. This tragedy Lee Gordon blames on the white man.

Lee Gordon's real troubles begin in the spring of 1943 when, at the age of thirty-one, he gets a job as union organizer of an aircraft plant in Los Angeles. The job is given to him not because he is a professional union organizer — he is not even a member of the union — but because the union needs a Negro organizer. And Lee Gordon takes the job because it is a white-collar job. The next fifty days are a nightmare. His honest efforts are thwarted at every turn, by the plant management and its deputy sheriffs and by the Communist Party, which tries to gain control of the new union. Lee Gordon refuses to sell out to either, and in the end is destroyed by both.

Mr. Himes's story, for all its hard realism and able writing, reads like a melodrama, with the Communist Party the real villain and the deputy sheriffs the actual murderers. His story also suffers from a form of elephantiasis. He tries to embrace too much and his themes cross and get mixed up, so that in the end Lee Gordon's tragedy could just as well have been that of a white man. This overzealousness led Mr. Himes into long generalizations and oversimplifications. The usual racial prejudices and discriminations against the Negro are merely catalogued, with the result that large segments of his book read not like a novel but like excerpts from extended social studies.

Mr. Himes has touched upon every phase of the Negro problem and has mercilessly vivisected the American Negro's personality. We have here clinical revelations of the Negro's homicidal mania, of his lust for white women, of his pathetic sense of inferiority, of his paradoxical anti-Semitism, of his arrogance and his incurable Uncle Tomism. At times it seems that Mr. Himes is trying to convince us that the whole Negro race in America, as a result of centuries of brutal oppression, is sick at soul.

Hatred reeks through his pages like yellow bile. The Negro hates the Jew and the Gentile and he hates his own Negroness; the Jew hates the Negro and the Gentile and his own Jewishness. The pure Marxist Rosenberg, who hates nobody except the capitalists, is expelled from the Communist Party because of his goodness.

The strict Party-line Communists will not like Mr. Himes's book and will no doubt denounce it. The Trotskyites will probably take it to their bosoms, as certainly will all those who believe in unions free of Communist control. As for the Negro problem, it occasionally finds momentary resolution in oversexed white women mixing up Marxism with Negro macrogenitalism.

STOYAN CHRISTOWE



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Norah Lofts

DOUBLEDAY

THE island of Banda, where Norah Lofts's new novel is set, really exists, a very small dot on a sizable map of the Netherlands Indies. One would be surprised if it did not. The world of which Mrs. Lofts writes may be long ago and far away, but the pattern of events against which her seventeenth-century Dutch planters move is familiar enough—trade, invasion, colonial exploitation, squabbles among the victors over division of the loot, revolt of the subjugated natives, general massacre, and suppression of the revolt.

There is nothing tenuous about the large framework of *Silver Nutmeg*. Mrs. Lofts apologizes for the absence of specific local geography, occasioned by the Japanese occupation of the island. She need not have done so. The conviction with which she presents the operation of the Dutch East India Company's nutmeg monopoly, the colonists' preoccupation with crops and finance, the muddled civil and military affairs of the island, and the lavish emptiness of life there more than make up for the indefinite location of a few landmarks.

Thanks to the exotic affairs of the island and Mrs. Lofts's genuine gift for storytelling, the book is absorbing reading. *Silver Nutmeg* tells the story of Annabet van Goens, married in Holland by proxy and shipped out to Banda to a husband she had never seen. This Evert Haan started life as the son of one of her grandfather's less reputable tenant farmers, but with the van Goens money gone in speculation, and Annabet's looks gone in a bout with rheumatic fever, her family could not afford to quibble. Evert was so disgusted by his bride's battered appearance that he arranged to have her murdered by the all-efficient Malay holy man, Shal Ahmi.

Annabet, however, was not murdered. She recovered her beauty and acquired Evert's love, which she no longer wanted, having fallen in love herself with an English smuggler. The unhappy partnership of Evert and his wife—Annabet wavering from gratitude to guilt to annoyance, and Evert rocketing from devotion to abusive jealousy—arrived at a tentative truce only when Shal Ahmi's rebellion threatened both their lives.

The minor figures in the story, agents and soldiers and sea captains, are almost all vivid and attractive. It is strange that Annabet and Evert should be totally lacking in charm, since Mrs. Lofts can bestow it lavishly on her other people, but the truth is these two wear out their welcome. They are reasonable people, plausible, understandably confused by their own misdirected affairs, but they arouse very little sympathy. Perhaps they are intended to illustrate the defects of a purely materialistic society.

PHOEBE LOU ADAMS

1 1 1

THE BOSTON BOOK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Arthur Griffin and Esther Forbes

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BOSTON, like every lovable old city in the world, has been the subject of a great number of books. She has been evaluated in terms of praise and disparagement, delight and dissatisfaction. She was always a city for the pencil and brush. She ought to have had, in their day, the full Henry James and Pennell treatment, or the full Howells

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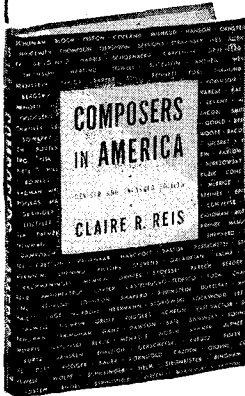
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WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN, well-known foreign correspondent, has represented the *Christian Science Monitor* in Russia, the Far East, and Paris. He is the author of many books, including *The History of the Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* and *The Ukraine: A Submerged Nation*.

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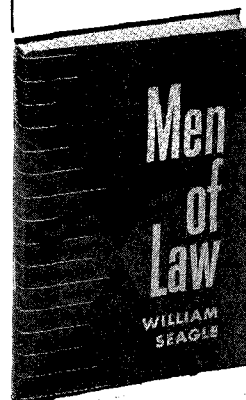
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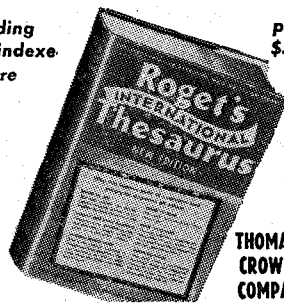
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**Here's one word out of the
145,000 in this book**

(actual size)

PRO-TECT-IVE *adj.* 1 Affording or suitable for protection; sheltering; defensive; specifically, in political economy, insuring or intended to insure protection to home industries; as, a protective tariff. 2 Closely surveillant, while alleging to provide protection; as, Nazi protective custody.
— *noun* Something that protects; specifically, an aseptic covering for a wound. — *adv.* — **-NESS** *noun*.

**Check this definition
(or your own favorite word) for**

✓ **FULLNESS** ✓ **CLARITY**
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and Pennell treatment, though somehow she never did. Oxford and London, Edinburgh, Paris, and Rome have each been preserved for posterity in excellent books full of agreeable pictures. London and Edinburgh have been fortunate in the perambulations of two members of the Bone family. Not every city can have such luck.

Here in this book of stunning photographs by Arthur Griffin, tightly caulked with appropriate paragraphs by the author of *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, is the Boston we know and don't know. Mr. Griffin takes pictures as if he were working with a needle on a copper plate. The edges are sharp, the shadows black and deep; and he has opened his shutter with full advantage taken of the vagaries of Boston weather. The book is happily not arranged by seasons; but something in every picture — in the sly way that Alfred Hitchcock appears in his own screen productions — gives the absolute signature of the month. A fine sense of composition is shown to best advantage in the views of the steaming kettle above the coffee shop in Court Street, a corner of the Common seen through St. Paul's Greek Revival columns, the Nôtre-Dame-like spectacle of Boston from the tower of the "new" Old South, the skiers in deserted Park Street, and in the only photograph I ever saw of Symphony Hall that gives it (surprisingly) the Athenian look. It saddens me that Mr. Griffin found nothing for his art in the great abutments and peppers and salts of the Longfellow Bridge, in the febrile evening mists of spring that make strange magic of the Hill as seen from Technology; in a shot at Locke-Ober's, Durgin-Park's, the epicurean North End, or the Boston Stone. Space likely forbade. But to have the Custom House Tower appear at least a dozen times in a book of 122 pages was, I think, a mistake. The series of color frontispieces, incidentally, is less effective than the black and whites. (Note to photographers, amateur and otherwise: full data on every picture — quite unintelligible to me — are in the back of the book.)

Miss Forbes writes affectionately and breezily about what she knows as an historian and loves at first hand. Her prose is too chatty to be her best, but it has all her charm and warmth. As a portrait of Boston, this is not the full treatment, but a very pleasing book about an endlessly fascinating subject.

DAVID MCCORD

SEEDTIME

\$3.00

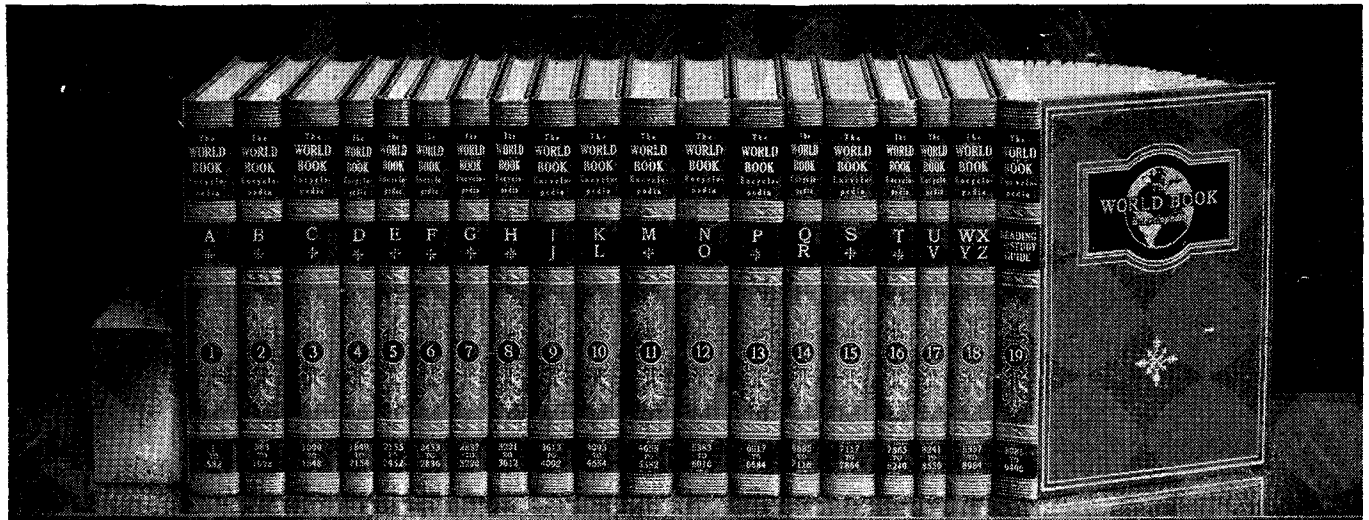
Leo Katz

KNOPF

IN THIS novel by an Austrian we have a microcosm of the conditions in dissident Central Europe which precipitated World War I. Those conditions are continuing and their ultimate consequences it is difficult to foresee. Most of the action takes place in the small community of Sereth, the author's native town, in Bukovina, in 1907, at the time an Austro-Hungarian outpost bordering on Rumania. Emperor Francis Joseph had just then issued a liberalizing edict which granted universal suffrage. It was coincident with peasant revolts in Rumania, and repercussions were feared in Austria, where the conservative elements tried to deflect the public mind from main issues by anti-Jewish pogroms and the like. The novel teems with characters — Jews and Christians, politicians and farmers, soldiers and *agents provocateurs*.

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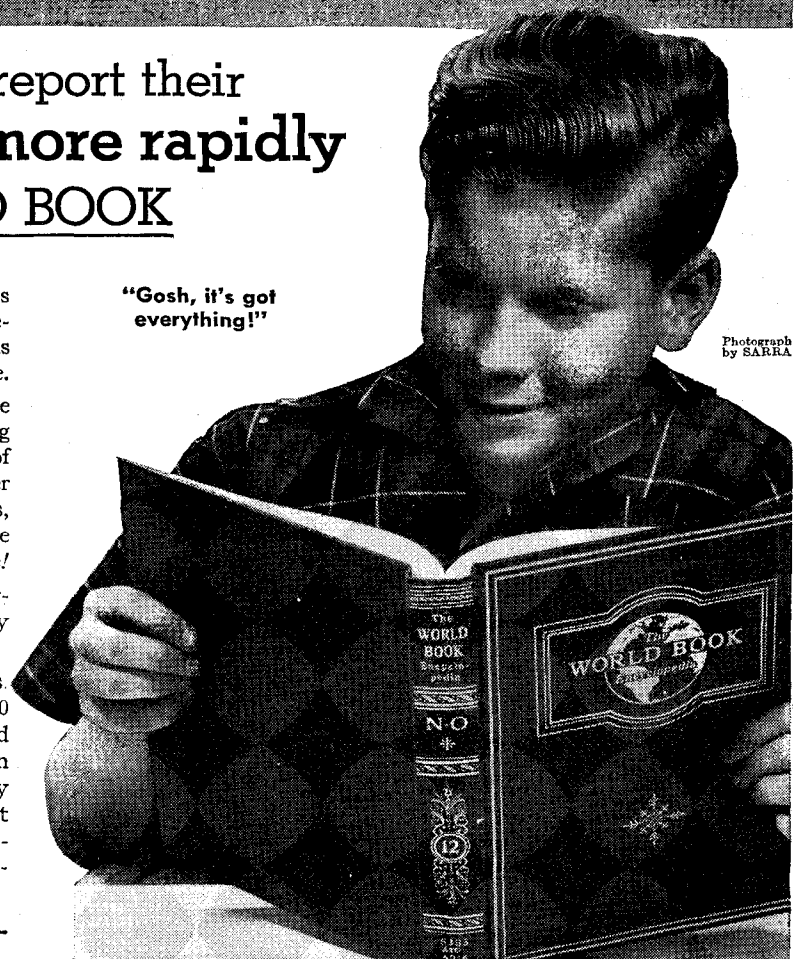
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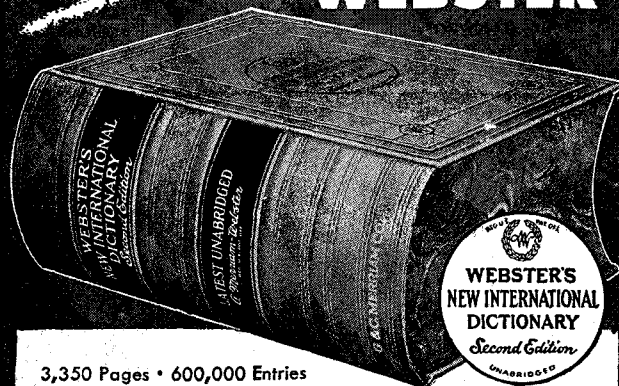
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Vasili, a young corporal, led the peasant revolt. Methodical, in the way of the new school of rebels, he worked with other peasants secretly, collecting guns and ammunition. He was in love with Anna, who wholeheartedly cooperated in the conspiracy. On the other side, Franz Beil, mayor of Sereth, plotted with the exploiters to frustrate the revolt and to minimize the effect of the Emperor's reforms. The little revolution proved abortive, as were all such attempts in those days before the workers were organized. When, at the end, Vasili is exiled, he utters the prophecy that "the day will come" when the planted seed will bring forth the harvest.

This story is written in terms of events rather than of character. Translated from the German, the writing is strong, if sometimes a bit ragged; it is satirical and dramatic, and rich with portent. It helps one to understand Central Europe and its troubles.

JOHN COURNOS

WAY OF LIFE

\$2.75

A. Hamilton Gibbs

LITTLE, BROWN

BILL THATCHER was a New Englander. He spent his summers in the Berkshires, in a square, ancient, white house. In the winter his family lived in an apartment facing the green little park of Boston's Louisburg Square. He went to Dartmouth, played the piano, wanted to make a career of music. But the early 1940's found him in a small English village called Little Minchen; and instead of the ghosts of English yeomen appropriate to the thatched roofs and ancient verdure, Little Minchen was full of very contemporary American paratroopers. And it was because Bill Thatcher was an American paratrooper that British Major Wainwright asked him home. Major Wainwright had chucked London at the end of the previous war. He had dug in at Little Minchen, married his girl, and together they had raised vegetables, flowers, and an intelligent and lovely daughter named Minchen after the place in which they had created their own particular peace. Major Wainwright hated war. But the early 1940's found Minchen a Land Girl who spent her free hours playing the piano for the American troops, and the Major and his wife doing their bit and taking the invasion of their private serenity with generosity and fortitude.

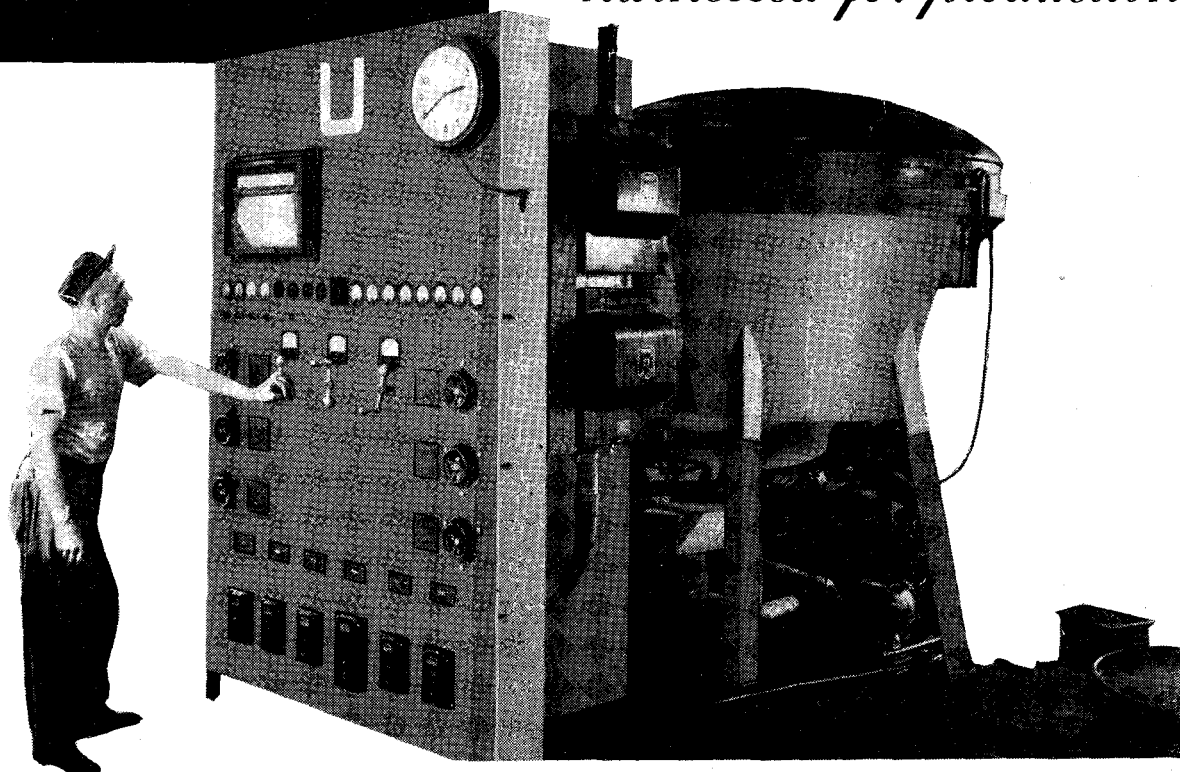
It was inevitable that Bill and Minchen should fall in love. They were both young, aware, sensitive. They had grown up with an ocean between them, yet they matched. One background was the equivalent of another, and the future was theirs to make, but first to believe in, to have faith in against all the odds and insecurities of a warring world. *Way of Life* is the story of this faith. Mr. Gibbs has written a tribute to the soundness of this newest war generation, less bitter and at the same time more knowing than their fathers'.

As counterpoint to a simple love story, there are italicized passages preceding the chapters, odd flashes and snapshots of the more sordid corners of the recent conflict, of any conflict. Mr. Gibbs's hatred of war, his admiration and hope for the young, and his belief in life itself make his novel more than the pleasant reading of its surface — it is all on the side of the angels.

DOROTHY HILLYER

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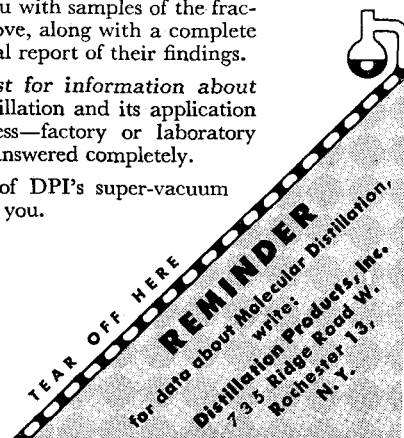
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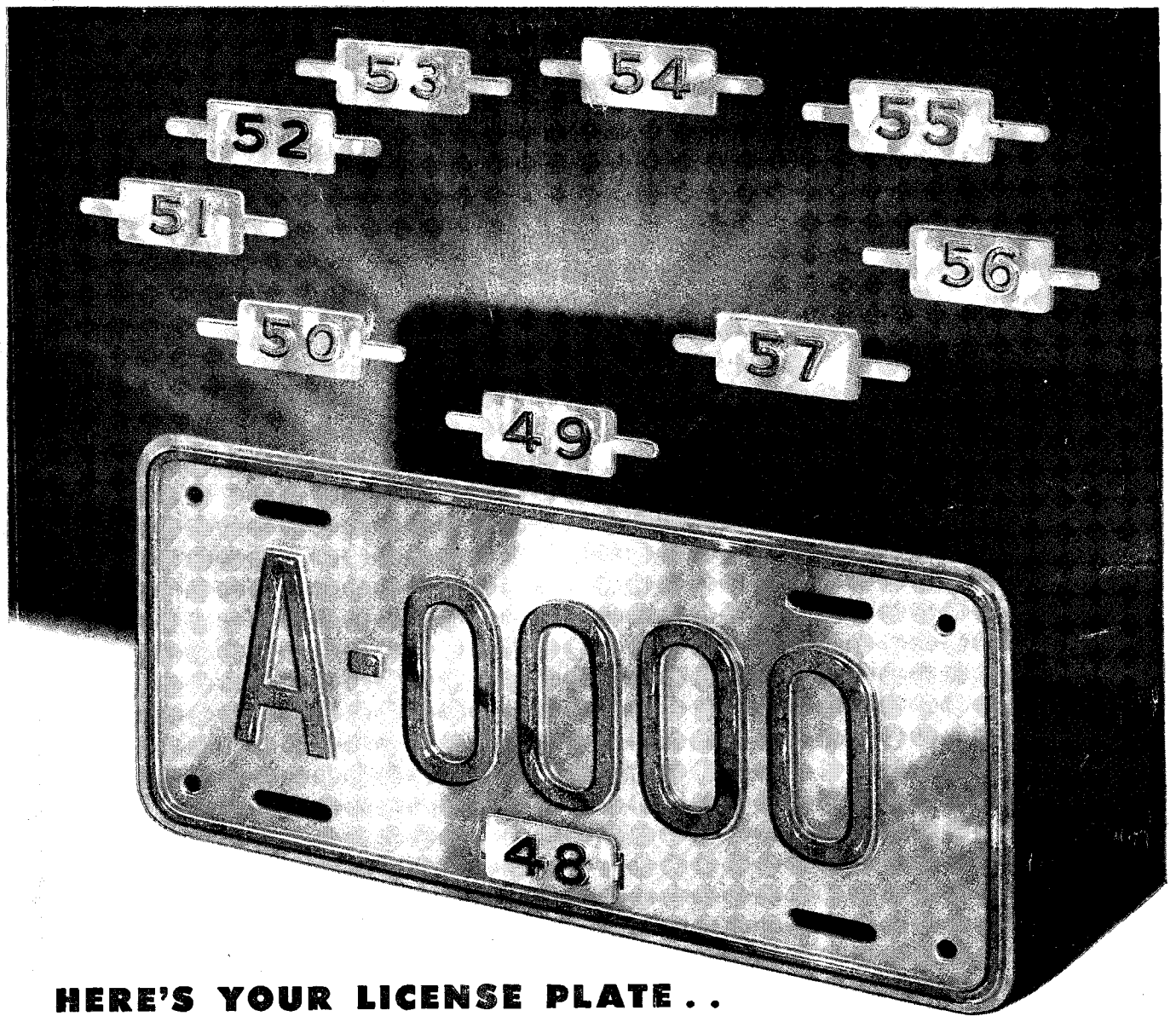
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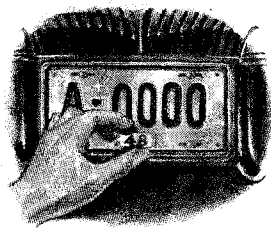
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